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**When Two Worlds Collide:  
Examining the Incorporation of  
Speech, Language and  
Communication Provision within a  
Youth Offending Setting through a  
Complexity informed Realist  
approach**

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PhD

2020

**When Two Worlds Collide: Examining  
the Incorporation of Speech, Language  
and Communication Provision within a  
Youth Offending Setting through a  
Complexity informed Realist approach**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of the University of  
Northumbria at Newcastle for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Research undertaken in the Faculty of Art,  
Design and Social Sciences

March 2020

## **Abstract**

### ***Why is the subject of the thesis important?***

Research consistently demonstrates the influence that speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have on the criminal behaviour of young people with a suggested overlap between behaviour and communication identified as a critical feature in the profile of many young offenders (Law, 2011, Snow & Powell, 2004, Bryan et al., 2007). Within the criminal justice system (CJS) young people with SLCN are considerably over represented; 60-90% compared to 10% of the general population (Hughes et al., 2012). Contact with the CJS exposes young people to a range of experiences which draw heavily on expressive and receptive language skills (including police interviews, court proceedings, therapeutic programs for example). An individual's SLCN therefore raises barriers to fully comprehending what is happening, what is expected and how to successfully engage with services or conditions set by imposed orders.

### ***How has the research been undertaken?***

A complexity informed realist approach was used to frame the research which included mixed methods for data collection, within a case study approach with a local Youth Offending Service (YOS).

### ***What are the main findings of the research?***

The findings present a nuanced account of the core generative mechanisms which impact on the implementation of SLCN provision within a YOS setting. They describe elements for inclusion within a service delivery model and also identify key success factors in understanding the impact of such provision.

### ***Why do the research findings matter?***

There is a lack of literature regarding the how SLCN provision should be addressed within a YOS context. This research provides a unique contribution to the literature by developing programme theories pertaining to the key aspects of SLCN provision which impact on engagement levels of young people within a YOS setting. In addition, the methodological focus has allowed for an innovative sociological based approach to an often medically focused topic area.

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## Acknowledgements

*A PhD is a journey* - it took me a while to understand this concept, but now I finally get it! A part-time PhD is tough, juggling the competing demands of research, of work, of raising a family at the same time as looking after yourself. The journey I've had whilst undertaking this PhD has been one of many ups and downs with a couple of crashes and broken bones along the way!

I couldn't have completed this journey without the expert guidance from my supervisory team, who have skilfully guided me through this academic rite of passage. I am ever grateful for your constant belief in me, even at times when I did not believe in myself. Your prompt and constructive feedback has helped shape me as a Researcher and provided the structure I needed to complete this thesis.

Holding my hand throughout the whole of the journey has been my husband Jack. Thank you for providing the emotional support needed in helping me to get to where I am today.

I could not have undertaken this also without the amazing support of my in-laws Paul and Sue, who have spent many an hour looking after my children so that I could focus on my work.

A special thanks also has to go to the County Durham Youth Offending Service who have let me in and provided such an interesting and important topic for this research. Thank you to all the staff and the young people within the service that gave up their time to talk to me and share their thoughts.

I'd like to dedicate this thesis to my two children, George and Beatrice. Follow your dreams, you can achieve your goals!

## **Declaration**

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others. The work was done in collaboration with the County Durham Youth Offending Service.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved. Approval has been sought and granted by IRAS on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and the Faculty Ethics Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2016.

**I declare that the Word Count of this Thesis is 79,497 words**

Name: Samantha L Redgate

Signature:

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020

# **1. Introduction**

Up to 90% of young offenders have a speech, language or communication need (SLCN) (Hughes et al., 2012). The County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) identified this as a significant issue and began to pilot a three-phase intervention incorporating SLCN provision within the service. This was overseen by a Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) seconded into the team. Working alongside the CDYOS and SLT, this research aimed to identify what successful Youth Offending Service based, speech language and communication provision looks like; and how and why it impacts on engagement with young people in the service.

This chapter provides the overarching narrative for the thesis. The methodological approach; complexity informed realism, as highlighted within the thesis title is expanded in relation to the context it provides, prior to being explored in detail within chapters five and six. The research context is documented, including an overview of the case study site; County Durham Youth Offending service (CDYOS) and an exploration of the main research aims and questions guiding the research. The chapter then concludes with an overview of each of the individual chapters contained within the thesis in order to identify their contribution to the research.

## **1.1 Research context**

Research consistently demonstrates the influence that speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have on the criminal behaviour of young people with a suggested overlap between behaviour and communication identified as a critical feature in the profile of many young offenders (Law, 2011, Snow & Powell, 2004, Bryan et al 2007). Within the criminal justice system young people with SLCN are considerably over represented; 60-90% compared to 10% of the general population (Hughes et al., 2012). It can therefore be suggested that young people with SLCN are the norm rather than the exception within the youth offending population.

Contact with the criminal justice system exposes young people to a range of experiences which draw heavily on expressive and receptive language skills (for example, police interviews, court proceedings, therapeutic programs delivered within Youth Offending Services). An individual's SLCN can therefore raise barriers to fully comprehending what is happening, what is expected and how to successfully engage with services or conditions set by convictions.

The research looks to address this issue of engagement by examining the provision of a traditional health-based initiative (speech, language and communication) within a youth criminal justice setting (Youth Offending Service). This raises questions and issues relating to contextual traditions and constraints between the two settings, health and criminal justice, hence the phrasing 'when two worlds collide' in the title. These contextual factors are explored within the research through a complexity informed realist approach. This approach views both the SLCN provision, and the Youth Offending Service (YOS) as complex interventions/settings, operating within complex systems (expanded further in Chapter five). A complex system is one in which elements interact in a non-linear fashion in such a way that it is not possible to predict the behaviour of the system as a whole, from simply knowledge of the elements within the system (Gatrell, 2005). Viewing both elements as complex acknowledges the multiple factors, both internal and external to the systems which impact on service delivery, and therefore ultimately, the young people engaged in the YOS.

In viewing SLCN related provision within a YOS setting as an intervention, the new ideas and/or resources it provides into the existing social relationships of the YOS can be explored. Taking a realist approach within the framework of complexity allows this research to 'make sense' of the complex processes within the systems where SLCN provision and the YOS reside. It does this by formulating plausible explanations known as 'programme theories'.

Realism is a theory driven approach which seeks to understand not only whether an intervention works, but what it is about SLCN related provision within a YOS setting that works, for whom, in what circumstances and why (Pawson & Manzano-Santaella, 2012).

It acknowledges that interventions take place within complex social systems (Pawson & Tilley, 1997) and is therefore well suited to studying interventions, such as SLCN related provision within YOS settings, with complex and potentially multiple pathways from implementation to impact.

Using this approach allows for theories to be developed which identify contextual considerations and the mechanisms operating within them. Context in this sense describes those features of the conditions in which interventions are introduced that are relevant to the operation of mechanisms, leading to outcomes. Context must not be confused with locality, and is often institutional, social or cultural (i.e. norms, values rules, inter-relationships, economic conditions, existing public policy) (Dalkin et al., 2018; Pawson and Tilley, 1997). Mechanisms here are identified as the combination of resources offered by an intervention and the reasoning that these are able to enhance in a particular context and lead to measurable or observable outcomes (Dalkin et al, 2015). The combination of context and mechanisms creates outcomes, as to how and why SLCN related provision has impacted on and shaped service delivery within the YOS, in addition to its impact on engagement with the young people in the service. Empirical data is then used to 'test' and refine the programme theories, providing a more nuanced account how SLCN related provision (the intervention) works (Dalkin et al, 2015).

Within the research, in order to identify impact(s) on SLCN related provision within a YOS setting and associated outcomes relating to the engagement of young people within the service, a service delivery model is developed in response to identified need. Therefore, in order to better understand the emerging findings and to generate practical implications and recommendations about how to develop SLCN related provision within a YOS setting, normalisation process theory (NPT) has been adopted as a middle range theory<sup>1</sup>. NPT is concerned with identifying, characterising, and explaining the key mechanisms which promote and/or inhibit the implementation, embedding and

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<sup>1</sup> Middle range theory: '*...theory that lies between the minor but necessary working hypotheses ...and the all-inclusive systematic efforts to develop a unified theory that will explain all the observed uniformities of social behaviour, social organization and social change*' (Merton, 1968 p39)

integration of new complex interventions (May, et al 2018). NPT was selected because successful implementation of new practices such as SLCN provision within a YOS setting relies on co-ordinated, collective behaviour of individuals working within the constraints of the YOS context. NPT therefore provides an explanatory theory of implementation, emphasising collective action in explaining and shaping, the embedding of new practices (May et al, 2018). This approach compliments the complexity informed realist approach used to structure the research and contributes to the depth of the emerging programme theories from the research in terms of their explanatory potential.

## **1.2 County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS)**

The research adopts a case study approach, using CDYOS as a case study site. A brief description of the CDYOS is detailed below, including an overview of their SLCN strategy, the implementation of which was the basis for using CDYOS as a case study site.

Youth Offending Service's (YOS's<sup>2</sup>) are statutory partnerships which were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people. Each local authority is responsible for establishing a YOS within their area.

CDYOS is a complex service. It is part of Children and Young People's Services Directorate within Durham County Council with links at both strategic and operational level to Criminal Justice, Community Safety and Children, Young People and Families arenas. CDYOS is accountable to a multi-agency Management Board, chaired by the Head of Children's Services, Children and Young People's Services, Durham County Council.

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<sup>2</sup> Note the terms YOT and YOS are often used interchangeably, with the recognition that these services will be known by different names for different organisations. YOS has been used throughout this thesis as this is the term CDYOS use.

The strategic Purpose of CDYOS is;

- To prevent re-offending by children and young people
- To reduce First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the youth justice system
- To be achieved by delivering specialist interventions
- Underpinned by safeguarding and public protection

CDYOS manages young people across the whole youth justice spectrum (out of court and post court) in order to reduce re-offending. All young people engaging with the service have been through formal Police processes (e.g. arrest/Police custody suite). As of 1 April 2017, CDYOS had 89 staff, with 13 seconded from partners including, Durham Constabulary, National Probation Service, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT), Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT), Tees Esk and Wear Valleys Mental Health Trust (TEWV) and the Think Family Team, making CDYOS a multi-disciplinary team. The majority of staff work directly with the young people engaged in the service. The staff groups and numbers within each aspect of the staff team can be broken down as follows;

- Management – 7
- Administration – 13
- Health-based secondments – 7
- Police and probation-based secondments – 6
- Working directly with young people – 56
  - Staff are split between four teams; North case management, South case management; Delivery team; Wrap around team

The CDYOS has been highlighted at a national level as being forward thinking in terms of its approaches to service provision and commitment to coordinated service delivery at the local level. The Taylor Review of the youth justice system in 2015 (p22) outlines the considerable achievements of the youth justice system in terms of adapting innovative approaches and comments:

*‘Some local authorities such as County Durham and Cornwall have retained a YOT model closer to its original form but co-located it with their children’s services to achieve a more integrated response to vulnerable and offending children.’*



Part of the integrated response highlighted above for CDYOS also relates to the number of partnership arrangements they have in place with organisations such as the Police, National Probation Service and Health Services. The links with Health Services have included a Speech and Language Therapist from Harrogate and district NHS Foundation Trust (trust commissioned by the Local Authority to deliver SLCN services across the county) and initially providing ad hoc training, and later seconded into the team. This link was first established in 2013 when a Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) was commissioned to provide SLCN awareness training for all CDYOS staff.

A comprehensive CDYOS SLCN strategy was produced in March 2014 cementing the importance of the importation of SLCN related provision within the service. The strategy outlined CDYOS's response to the SLCN's of young people who offend in County Durham in order to support their principal aim of preventing re-offending and reducing first time entrants into the youth criminal justice system. This was the first time SLCN had been addressed in such a strategy within the CDYOS. Although SLCN were not new, national awareness raising of the implications and impact at the national level through governmental reports, and local awareness raising through ad hoc training sessions, had resulted in the senior management team deciding that SLCN should be viewed with higher regard and importance and as such required a separate strategy in order that it be properly addressed. The strategy outlined three key phases of implementation:

1. **Phase 1** (March – September 2014): *Training of staff and the development of resources and processes.*

A Speech and language Therapist (SLT) was seconded into the CDYOS with the aim of examining and reviewing current service delivery processes to ensure they are communication friendly, to provide SLCN related training workshops to CDYOS staff and to develop printed resources to assist staff in engaging young people with SLCN.

2. **Phase 2** (September 2014 – March 2015): *Supporting the communication needs of young victims of youth crime*

The SLT secondment was extended to cover this phase of the strategy in order that they could develop a number of communication friendly resources, such as explanations of restorative justice in order to increase understanding and engagement of young people and their families with restorative conferencing materials. In addition, the post holder worked to explore ways of increasing involvement of young victims of youth crime in restorative justice processes

3. **Phase 3** April 2015 – March 2017: *Working with young people who offend with identified SLCN*

The SLT secondment was again extended to cover this phase of the strategy. The primary aim within this phase shifted to working directly with young people engaged in the CDYOS with suspected SLCN's as part of the CDYOS intervention plan, who require (and consent to) a therapeutic service intervention (i.e. individual or group speech and language therapy provision). In addition, the SLT provides support and guidance to CDYOS case manager's in relation to how to work most effectively with their young person.

### 1.3 The research question and focus of this thesis

This PhD was approved in May 2015 and so began part way through the implementation of phase 3 of the CDYOS SLCN strategy. By this time much of the foundations for incorporation of SLCN related provision within CDYOS had been made. This research therefore aimed to work with the CDYOS in understanding what the local need actually was in relation to a service delivery model, as to date all service developments had been made in respect to national findings and literature and hunches with regards to local need. The key focus of the research was to identify what mechanisms are needed within the context of the CDYOS, in terms of delivering a service which includes SLCN related provision which can reflect local need, i.e. understanding the key components which make it 'work'. A second theme building on this aimed to begin to explore the effectiveness of the service provision on engagement with young people, i.e. what impact it has, what 'works'?

Due to the timescales of the three phases of the SLCN strategy as set out above, all fieldwork had to be scheduled and completed by March 2017 as funding within the CDYOS to continue provision of a seconded SLT beyond this date was uncertain. With the part-time PhD starting in October 2014, and ethical approval only being granted in May 2015 this resulted in fieldwork strategy having to be developed and implemented very quickly. This did therefore not leave much time to explore the literature base and develop refined initial programme theories prior to going out in the field. Fieldwork started in November 2015. However, it transpired following completion of the fieldwork (March 2017) that the CDYOS managed to secure funding to keep a seconded SLT post within the team, and the post is still to this day hosted within the CDYOS.

Two questions were used to guide the research;

1. What does a YOS SLCN model look like – What does an effective YOS service delivery model with SLCN provision look like?
2. What difference does it make – Can the development of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting impact positively on engagement with young people in the service?

These questions have been used throughout the research to structure the data collection and analysis. Underpinning these questions, is the notion that the research will contribute to improving outcomes for young people with SLCN in YOS settings.

***Question 1: What does an effective YOS service delivery model with SLCN provision look like?***

Question 1 is the primary focus of the research and is focused on moving from an exploration of general knowledge in the area of SLCN within youth justice, to the development of a local understanding in terms of identifying what speech and language service level provision should look like. This is achieved through the development of a service level delivery model. As highlighted above, this research began part-way through

the implementation of SLCN related provision into the CDYOS. The service delivery model therefore looked to identify the key generative mechanisms (unobservable and emergent causal powers which result from interplay between structural proprieties and properties of agency, see Chapter five for further explanation) required to enable the YOS to successfully incorporate SLCN initiatives within their context.

The model was based on levels of knowledge and understanding about SLCN held by key stakeholders, and the impact this is viewed to have on provision of services within CDYOS. Evidence from the literature and local key stakeholders was complimented by local and national data collected for this research from YOS's who have implemented some degree of speech, language and communication provision within their service to identify common delivery features. Discussions with, and data provided by CDYOS, was able to provide greater meaning and explanation to the existing literature. Based on this, initial programme theories focusing on identified contexts and mechanisms were developed in order to shape the service model.

The key mechanisms and contextual considerations identified through the research are outlined in the service model presented in Chapter 9. Programme theories here highlight the potential causal pathways between interventions and impacts through the formulae Context + Mechanism = Outcome (C+M=O). These programme theories (explanatory formulae) were refined as the project progressed through question 2.

Question 1 aimed to address the following;

- Detail what an effective YOS with SLCN related provision should look like
- Produce programme theories<sup>3</sup> to hypothesise the contextual considerations and key generative mechanisms which combine to effect SLCN related provision within a YOS setting

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<sup>3</sup> Programme theories are explained within Chapter 5. They can be defined as '*...the ideas and assumptions underlying how, why and in what circumstances complex social interventions work.*' (Dalkin et al, 2015 p3)

***Question 2: Can the development of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting impact positively on engagement with young people in the service?***

Question 2 acts as a supplementary question building on the outputs from question 1. Originally it had been hoped to evidence the impact of SLCN related provision within the service on the engagement of young people through using longitudinal case-based quantitative data; however, access to data from online case management systems proved very difficult. Access had to be made via data officers within CDYOS due to confidentiality regulations. This led to limited data interrogation, as requests for data had to be made in advance without comprehensive knowledge of the data set and data could not be interrogated and manipulated in response to emerging data gathered due to time constraints placed by the service on the use of the data officers' time. In addition, the nationally used case management system, 'Asset', also changed during the course of the research to Asset Plus which resulted in new systems needing to be learnt by CDYOS staff and a gradual case transfer period of all active cases on the system. This led to limited data access as only partial cases were on the new system. In addition, it was also not possible to bypass the standardised reporting structure of Asset Plus in order to download a case-based longitudinal spreadsheet for analysis.

Question 2 was therefore reframed and an evaluation framework was developed in co-production with the CDYOS in order to explore identified 'success factors' of incorporating SLCN related initiatives within the CDYOS (see Chapter 10 and 11 for detailed discussion) which impacted on the engagement of the service with young people. Data was generated through interviews with staff and young people, alongside results from feedback questionnaires from staff, parents and carers, and young people and available local datasets in order to ascertain impact of SLCN related provision on engagement at the local level.

Question 2 aimed to address the following;

- Understand the implications of SLCN related service provision on engagement between YOS and young people

- Identify what impact and outcome(s) a YOS with SLCN related service provision has for the service, for staff, and for young people

The two questions (what does an effective YOS SLCN related provision look like; and can it impact positively on the engagement of young people?) have resulted in two methods chapters, two findings chapters and two discussion chapters presented within this thesis. This is in order to allow for a full exploration and discussion of each question prior to bringing all the analysis together to address the overarching research question in chapter 13.

## 1.4 Chapter overview

The narrative of this thesis is set out below providing an overview of each chapter.

### ***Chapter 2: Understanding Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)***

This chapter is part one of three background chapters which provide an overview of the substantive topic areas of the research including SLCN, YOS and the association between SLCN and YOS. Chapter two provides an account of what SLCN is and how it can impact at the micro (individual), meso (local service provision), and macro (national) level. It provides a succinct overview of the importance of speech, language and communication in terms of the development of young people.

### ***Chapter 3: Placement of the Youth Offending Service***

The second of the background chapters, this chapter provides an overview of the YOS. The chapter provides the context of the topic area through discussion of the evolution of attitudes and approaches to youth crime and highlighting current thinking within the discipline in order to provide the overarching context to the research.

#### ***Chapter 4: Association between SLCN and the YOS: Identifying potential service strategies***

The final of the background chapters, chapter 4 aims to bring together the previous two chapters in order to discuss the impact of SLCN within a YOS setting. This chapter provides the rationale for the importance of this as a topic in relation to requirements for research.

#### ***Chapter 5: What's in a Mechanism? Development of the Theoretical Framework***

This research is based on a complexity informed realist perspective. This chapter explores complexity and realist informed approaches and describes how they are relevant in terms of this research.

#### ***Chapter 6: Exploration of the Methodological approach***

This chapter provides an overview of the methodological approaches used to guide the research. The chapter identifies the main approaches to data collection and explores the interlinkages between them in identifying the methodological framework used to guide this research.

#### ***Chapter 7: Question 1 Methods***

Methods used to inform the data collection in response to question one are identified within this chapter.

#### ***Chapter 8: Question 1 Results***

Findings are presented from question one, illustrating what an effective YOS service delivery model with SLCN provision needs to include.

#### ***Chapter 9: Question 1 Discussion***

This chapter brings together the findings from chapter seven with existing literature explored within the background chapters to investigate the ideas and assumptions that underlie how, why and in what circumstances complex social interventions such as SLCN provision within a YOS setting can work.

### ***Chapter 10: Question 2 Methods***

Methods used to inform the data collection in response to question two are identified within this chapter.

### ***Chapter 11: Question 2 Results***

Findings from question two are presented, identifying what successful SLCN provision may look like alongside the implications of SLCN related service provision on engagement between YOS and young people.

### ***Chapter 12: Question 2: Discussion***

This chapter brings together the findings from chapter eleven with existing literature to investigate the impact of SLCN provision within a YOS setting.

### ***Chapter 13: Discussion and Conclusion***

This is the final chapter within the thesis. It brings together the findings from question one and two in an exploration of the incorporation of speech, language and communication provision within a YOS setting through a complexity informed realist approach.



## **2. Understanding Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This thesis explores the role of the SLT seconded into CDYOS and the subsequent SLCN provision provided within the service through a case study approach. It is therefore important to first explore the concept of SLCN in order to provide an understanding on how and why such needs are an important consideration for the youth offending population detailed within this thesis.

The chapter begins by providing a descriptive overview of what constitutes a SLCN. The micro context of the individual is then described, identifying the impacts and influences SLCN may have on a person. The chapter then moves onto the macro level, providing contextual information in relation to recent national policy development connected to SLCN. The chapter ends with a look at the development of the role of the Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) and how this shapes thinking towards SLCN related services and their placement.

A number of links are made to youth offending throughout the chapter. However, the focus of the chapter is on providing a description of SLCN more generally in order to provide a detailed background to the substantive topic area of the thesis. Subsequent chapters explore youth offending and links between SLCN and YOS in more detail.

#### ***Importance of topic area***

The ability to communicate has been described as ‘essential for human functioning’ as it:

*‘...enables humans to express needs and wants, socialize with others, convey information, and participate in society.’ (McLeod & Threats, 2008 p92).*

Communication is a central feature of society, directly impacting upon a person’s ability to learn, develop friendships, and increase life chances (I CAN & RCSLT, 2018). Without the ability to adequately communicate, a person is seen to be at risk of becoming isolated from society. Poor conversational skills, poor non-verbal skills and poor social perception can all hinder an ability to form, develop and maintain relationships with others (I CAN, 2018). This social isolation also has consequential repercussions, including difficulties in developing coping strategies for conflict, problems accessing and engaging in education and negative peer and family relationships (Bryan, 2010 cited in Hughes et al, 2012). People with difficulties in their speech, language or communication skills are therefore viewed as particularly vulnerable and isolated within a community (Hughes et al, 2012).

With speech, language and communication such a central feature of society it is important to understand what is meant by the terminology, and what impacts it has, or can have, at the individual micro level, as well as the macro societal level.

The terms speech, language and communication are often used interchangeably. However, subtle differences between the terms should be noted in order to effectively examine the impacts of speech, language and communication as this will alter meaning and interpretation of the terminology. The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (2018) states that speech relates not only to words spoken, but also to expression in the voice; language includes both the spoken word and understanding spoken word by others; and communication relates to the interaction with others and can include verbal and non-verbal elements.

*Table 1: Speech, language and communication overview*

Speech	Language	Communication
Refers to:	Refers to speaking and understanding language:	Refers to how we interact with others:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Saying sounds accurately and in the right places in words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using words to build up sentences, sentences to build up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language is used to represent concepts and thoughts</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sounds people use to communicate words</li> <li>• Speaking fluently, without hesitating, or prolonging or repeating words or sounds</li> <li>• Speaking with expression with a clear voice, using pitch, volume and intonation to support meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conversations and longer stretches of spoken language</li> <li>• Understanding and making sense of what people say</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using language in different ways; to question, clarify, describe etc.</li> <li>• Non-verbal rules of communication; good listening, looking at people</li> </ul>
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(adapted from RCSLT, 2018)

## 2.2 What is Speech, Language and Communication Need?

Table 1 above details what speech, language and communication are, but what is a speech, language and communication need (SLCN)? The term 'SLCN' is essentially an overarching, common term used to describe the full range of speech, language and communication related difficulties a person may have. The 'need' descriptor within the term relates simply to the fact that one or more speech, language and/or communication difficulties are experienced by the person.

Providing a simple definition of SLCN is not straightforward. The term itself has become a generic one in recent times and has developed multiple meanings across different professions. This has caused issues with both interpretation and meaning between different disciplines (Dockrell et al, 2012), resulting in confusion and ambiguity of terms. In addition, the elements of the phrase itself: 'speech'; 'language'; and 'communication', are often used interchangeably which adds to levels of confusion and has the potential to impede dialogue between professional groups and/or with parents and young people (Dockrell et al, 2012). This is an important concept relating to the multi-discipline nature of YOS.

SLCN is often referenced within one of three contexts; education, health or policy. In general, it is seen to take the form of an inclusive term, encompassing all aspects of speech, language and communication, with a person experiencing a need in one or all of these areas.

At the macro policy level within the UK, SLCN has been defined using a broad statement of need encompassing all children with a difficulty in language and communication (Bercow, 2008). A similar broad definition approach is often taken by NHS health professionals, where SLCN has been defined to include the extensive range of needs related to all aspects of communication, from understanding others to forming sounds, words and sentences to expressing ideas and emotions and using language socially (NHS, 2015). In comparison, the Department for Education's Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (DfES 2001) takes a more restrictive use of the term, as a primary special educational need only. Overall however, it is seen to be agreed, that essentially people with SLCN have difficulties with;

*'...understanding others and making themselves understood...'* (Dept. of Education, 2011)

It is this notion of being able to understand others and being understood that is central to all interpretations of SLCN, and will therefore be the focus of this thesis in terms of a defining and understanding SLCN.

SLCN adapted definition – <i>Hindered ability in being able to understand others and/or make oneself understood</i>
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There is not simply one 'type' of SLCN. People vary in the pattern and severity of needs and difficulties they present with, and these individual difficulties can change and evolve across time and place (Law & Elliot, 2009). The actual types of difficulty a person experiences will determine the effect they have on everyday life.

SLCN are often described as a 'hidden difficulties' (ICAN & RCSLT, 2018). There is typically no specific visible appearance to SLCN. Generally, people with a SLCN look no

different to those without one (ICAN & RCSLT, 2018). In addition, because there is not just one 'type' of SLCN, awareness and diagnosis can be problematic. The lack of easily identifiable indicators that a person has some level of SLCN may therefore result in their needs being missed.

People with SLCN represent a large and diverse section of the general population and the spectrum of difficulties encountered is vast, ranging from mild difficulties, such as correct pronunciation of words to more severe difficulties such as having unintelligible speech. Often people with the more severe SLCN (autism diagnosis for example) have a variety of medical and educational labels to describe their needs, making severe SLCN a broad disability issue (Minnitt, 2018) (see section 2.3 for further discussion on SLCN as a broad disability issue).

## **2.3 SLCN Co-morbidity**

Young people with SLCN will often experience other difficulties as many developmental disorders are found to occur together (Cross, 2011). This co-occurrence of needs frequently results in the young people being described as having '*complex needs*' and within these complex needs it may be difficult to determine which need is primary and which is secondary (Davis & Florian et al, 2004). In addition, because young people are growing and developing, the nature of their SLCN along with any other difficulties experienced will change and develop over time (Cross, 2011). This again contributes to the difficulty of diagnosis and also aids as a mask to potentially hide the SLCN behind a more well know difficulty.

Cross (2011) highlights links between the most common difficulties found to be co-occurring with SLCN:

### Learning disabilities

A learning disability affects the way a person understands information and how they communicate. This means they can have difficulty:

- understanding new or complex information
- learning new skills
- coping independently

1.3 million people in the UK have a learning disability which equates to around 3% of the national population (Mencap). The majority of children with learning difficulties have also been found to have additional SLCN. Approximately 80% of young people with severe learning disabilities do not acquire effective speech, so they would be considered to have severe SLCN (Cross, 2011).

### Autism

0.1% of the population are estimated to have Autism and 0.6% to have Autistic Spectrum Disorders (Newschaffer et al, 2007). Young people with Autism are often considered as having severe SLCN (Cross, 2011).

### Cerebral Palsy

Approximately 0.2% of children are affected by Cerebral Palsy and up to 80% of young people with Cerebral Palsy have some degree of speech impairment (Odding et al, 2006). A minority of this population will be considered to have severe SLCN (Cross, 2011).

### Brain injury

In the UK, approximately 3,000 young people each year acquire a significant SLCN due to brain injury (Cross, 2011). Brain injuries will often impact on speech, language and communication ability.

### Deafness

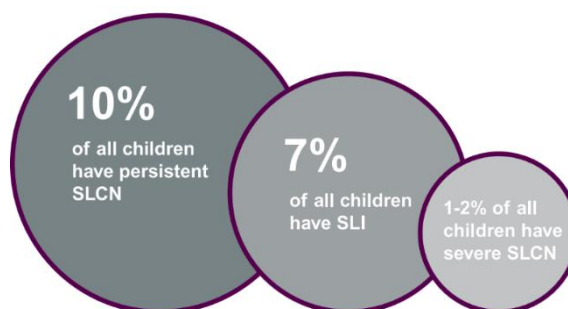
840 babies are born each year in the UK with significant deafness, approximately half are severely deaf (RNID). Some children with hearing impairments have significant difficulty acquiring verbal language, this is similar to that which is experienced by children with severe language impairments (Cross, 2011).

## 2.4 Prevalence of SLCN in society

It has been stated that 10% of young people (aged under 18) within the general population have a long-term SLCN creating barriers to communication and/or learning in everyday life (ICAN & RCSLT, 2018). Looking at this statistic in greater detail it can be broken down further (I CAN & RCSLT, 2018, Norbury et al., 2016);

- 7% of children and young people in the general population have SLCN as their main or primary difficulty – known as ‘specific language impairment’ (SLI) or ‘developmental language disorder’ (Note: terms often used interchangeably)
- 3% of children and young people in the general population have a SLCN as a result of another condition, such as autism, ADHD or hearing impairment.
  - Approximately 1-2% of these children have the most severe and complex SLCN

*Figure 1: Prevalence of SLCN in society*



(Cross, 2011 p8)

Developmental language disorder has been identified as one of the most common childhood disorders (Law et al, 2017). It (and specific language impairment) refers to individuals having language skills which are less well developed than their other skills (ICAN & RCSLT, 2018). These delayed/impaired language skills may last through childhood only, or for others, a lifetime (Clegg et al, 2005). They are characterised by the learning of language as the main/primary need of the individual and where there is no known cause for the delay/impairment (Catts et al, 2002).

## 2.5 SLCN as a disability

The 2010 Equality Act states that a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities (2010 Equality Act). SLCN is often viewed as a 'hidden disability' (Minnitt, 2018) and although the needs experienced by people differ, in many cases they have a profound impact on a person's life.

In terms of categorising 'types' of disability, it has been stated that young people with SLCN are five times more likely than their peers to be classified as having learning disabilities (Botting, 2005).

Because young people with severe SLCN often have a variety of medical and/or educational labels describing their needs, it has been suggested that severe SLCN can be thought of as a pan disability issue (Cross, 2011). Severe SLCN incorporates a range of needs, often with SLCN taking place as a secondary need behind a primary need described by another term or diagnosis. For example, significant difficulties in one or more of the following areas may be experienced by the person (Cross, 2011, p4):

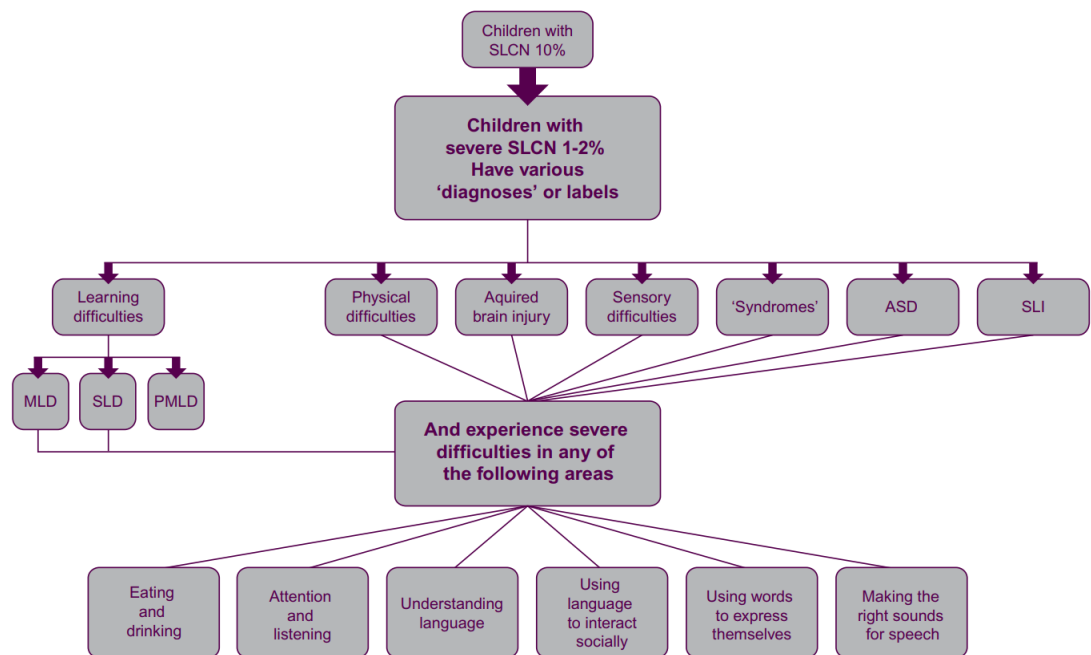
- *Problems with the muscles necessary for speech, or with motor co-ordination; for example, dyspraxia or dysarthria caused by Cerebral Palsy or in association with rare syndromes such as Angelman syndrome*
- *Severe social interaction difficulties, for example in Autism.*
- *Problems processing language; those with severe difficulty both understanding and using language e.g. due to Specific Language Impairment (SLI), Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD), Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD) or in association with syndromes such as Landau-Kleffner syndrome*
- *Children and young people with profound and severe hearing impairment*

Children and young people with severe SLCN are not often seen as a distinct group when defining SLCN as needs exhibited can be very different, dependent on their own individual primary/secondary diagnosis (Cross, 2011). Figure 2 below illustrates the



range of impacts a person may have linked to severe SLCN and demonstrates how neither diagnosis or SEN category can predict the type(s) of SLCN experienced.

**Figure 2: Children with severe SLCN: Neither diagnosis nor SEN category predicts type of SLCN**



(ICAN & RCSLT, 2018 p.5<sup>4</sup>)

SLCN can have lifelong consequences affecting all aspects of social inclusion, for example literacy, mental health, the acquisition of employment skills (Law et al, 2013, Law, 2011, Snow & Powell, 2004). These aspects of social inclusion are also generally found to be hindered within the youth offending population. Law et al (2013) argue that developed societies have become less inclusive with regards to communication disabilities. They state that the more sophisticated, educated, automated and digitalised societies become the greater the shift from '*...blue collar manual employment towards white collar communication focused jobs...*' (p488), which create challenges for those less advantaged. Ruben (2000), argues as a result of this 'shift from brawn to brain'

<sup>4</sup> Acronyms within figure 4: MLD – Mild Learning Difficulties, SLD – Severe Learning Difficulties, PMLD - Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder

young people with communication difficulties have become more vulnerable than young people with a physical disability. He States that:

*'During most of human history a person with a communication disorder was not thought of as 'disabled'. The shepherds, seamstresses, plowmen, and spinners of the past did not require optimal communication skills to be productive members of their society, as they primarily depended on their manual abilities. Today a fine high-school athlete—a great 'physical specimen'—who has no job and suffers from poor communication skills is not unemployed, but, for the most part, unemployable. On the other hand, a paraplegic in a wheel chair with good communication skills can earn a good living and add to the wealth of the society. For now and into the 21st century, the paraplegic is more 'fit' than the athlete with communication deficits.'* (p. 243)

## **2.6 The micro context: Impacts of having a SLCN**

As highlighted previously, SLCN encompass a broad spectrum of needs and therefore impacts will be very specific to the individual concerned. The impacts experienced will contribute to the micro level context surrounding the individual and thus influence their engagement with services designed to help them and society as a whole.

There is not a single contributory factor which can be evidenced as causing a person to develop SLCN (Communication Trust, 2013). In some cases, SLCN may be as a result of a medical condition which affects the normal development of speech, language and/or communication, for example: neurological damage, hearing impairment, cleft palate etc. Or, it may be linked to another type of learning difficulty, for example autism or cerebral palsy. SLCN can also result from reduced opportunities within a child's communication environment (i.e. social disadvantage and language difficulties relating to reduced opportunities) limiting their learning of language (Communication Trust, 2013). The notion of the impact of reduced opportunities is explored in more detail within 2.4.4. However, in the majority of cases there is no specific reason for SLCN (Roulstone & Lindsay, 2010).

There are numerous categories of SLCN. Each with a different definition, and many incorporating a continuum of need, thus highlighting the individualised aspect of SLCN. A number of the core categories of SLCN are outlined below in table 2 with an overview of each adapted from the Communication Trust (2012). The table highlights the vast range of SLCN categories and the associated impacts on the person each has. It should be noted however that this list is by no means exhaustive, it has been included to illustrate the breadth of SLCN categories and the range of impacts upon an individual each may have.

Table 2: SLCN category overview

<b>SLCN category</b>	<b>Brief overview, including impacts on the person</b>
<i>Speech and language delay/disorder</i>	A common developmental difficulty in childhood. May be either a secondary difficulty (accounted for by a primary condition such as: autism, hearing impairment, general developmental difficulties, behavioural or emotional difficulties or neurological impairment), or a primary difficulty whereby it cannot be accounted for by any other condition (Stark 1981, Plante 1998 cited in Law et al., 2010). Language delay/disorder may affect what can be said (expressive language), and/or what can be understood (receptive language). In addition, it may be accompanied by other SLCN's, i.e unclear speech (phonological delay)
<i>Specific receptive language impairment</i>	A specific difficulty in understanding and learning language which can't be explained in terms of another factor such as social, emotional, behavioural, educational, physical or sensory difficulties, hearing loss, global developmental delay or autism
<i>Specific expressive</i>	A specific difficulty in using expressive language, which can't be explained in terms of other factors such as social, emotional,

<i>language impairment</i>	behavioural, educational, physical or sensory difficulties, hearing loss, global developmental delay or autism
<i>Auditory processing difficulties</i>	Relates to a medical condition which results in an inability to process what's being heard. It describes a variety of problems with the brain that interfere with the processing of auditory information
<i>Verbal dyspraxia</i>	A disorder that affects a child's ability to produce clear speech. The condition can range from mild to severe. Although there is no physical difficulty, children struggle to say speech sounds accurately, consistently and/or in the correct sequence to say words accurately. Speech can be extremely difficult to understand
<i>Dysarthria</i>	A movement disorder caused by brain dysfunction or injury. It results in difficulties in moving the muscles needed for speech, eating and drinking. Dysarthria occurs in a number of neurological conditions (for example, cerebral palsy)
<i>Pragmatic language impairment</i>	A difficulty in using language appropriately in social situations
<i>Autistic spectrum disorders</i>	May struggle with aspects of communication and interaction as well as imaginative thinking. Children often have language needs, though this varies greatly between individuals. Some children may have high functioning autism and they may have good language with some specific areas of difficulty. Difficulties may or may not include phonic skills
<i>Down's syndrome</i>	Research has demonstrated a strong link between speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) with Down's syndrome over and above the impacts of learning disability and hearing loss associated with the syndrome

In addition to the physical effects a SLCN may produce, there are often wider impacts, including; educational attainment, social skills and behavioural issues. Again, a negative impact on these skills is often seen within the youth offending population. The links between SLCN and these wider impacts are complex with compounding risk often being a key factor linking a number of aspects, for example:

*‘...their communication difficulties put them at risk of literacy difficulties and this in turn puts them at risk of further educational problems; then as they come to adolescence they have problems coping with peers, with school and with family relationships and their communication difficulties become labelled as behavioural problems.’*

(Communication Trust, 2013 p5)

### **Educational attainment**

The RCSLT (2018) highlighted key educational attainment differences between young people with a diagnosed SLCN and those without, reporting that;

- 26% of young people with SLCN made expected academic progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage (completed for every child in the final term of their Reception year) compared with 69% of all children
- 15% of pupils with identified SLCN achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of their primary school years compared with 61% of all pupils
- 20.3% of pupils with SLCN gained grade 4/C or above in English and maths at GCSE, compared with 63.9% of all pupils

From these statistics assumptions between the correlation of low educational attainment and presence of SLCN can be made. However, it is important to note, as highlighted earlier, SLCN is a very broad term and will impact on individuals very differently and therefore although broad statements based on population level data can be made, the individual nature of SLCN and its implications must not be overlooked. In addition, there is also a question in relation to whether it is the young people that are unable to engage

adequately with the education system or the education system that is not able to adequately engage with young people with SLCN? Questioning therefore SLCN causality to educational environment. The RCSLT (2018) highlighted this potential issue by stating that it is poor understanding of, and insufficient resourcing for SLCN within educational institutions which results in many children and young people receiving inadequate, ineffective and inequitable support which impacts on their educational outcomes, their employability and their mental health.

### ***Mental health***

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as *'a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community'* (WHO, Workgroup for Development of Version of ICF for Children & Youth 2007). Communicative competence facilitates family and peer relations, promotes marketable employment skills and aids social engagement and therefore, can be described as a predictor variable in relation to development probability of mental health issues (Snow, 2009). Young people who experience developmental disorders linked to SLCN are perceived as having a higher risk of mental health difficulties than the general population (Botting et al, 2016). Conti-Ramsden & Botting (2008) highlighted that young people with language impairment experience higher levels of depression and anxiety than the typical population.

### ***Life chances/Social development***

Language and literacy skills are often under developed in young people with SLCN's. These skills are key components of modern-day society, affecting and impacting upon who we are, how we learn and how we are able to interact with the people around us. Therefore, persistent impairment is often seen in conjunction with problems for the individual in terms of their educational, social and emotional development (Cohen, 2002).

Problems in developing within these areas are also connected to increased risk of being engaged with youth criminal justice systems. Shared risk factors such as social development and disadvantage are seen in for both developing SLCN and involvement with youth offending services. Competence in spoken and written language also contributes to positive self-esteem and improved life chances (Snow and Powell, 2004).

Communication is more than just spoken word. Eye contact, facial expressions, and body language for example are social communication behaviours used in every day social interactions with others (Curenton & Justice, 2004; Inglebret et al, 2008). There is a wide range of acceptable norms within and across individuals, families, and cultures in relation to social communication behaviours. As a result of some SLCN an individual may not follow 'rules' for conversation, leading to potential difficulties participating in social settings and/or developing peer relationships and ultimately impacting on achieving academic success and performing successfully on the job (Whitehouse et al, 2009). Linking heavily to communication, it has been found that children with poor vocabulary skills are stated to be twice as likely as the general population to be unemployed when they reach adulthood (Law et al, 2009).

### ***Links to social disadvantage***

The Marmot review (2010) stated how those who are more disadvantaged tend to have poorer health and educational outcomes. The links between social disadvantage and SLCN are complex. It is difficult to distinguish SLCN caused by environmental factors and SLCN caused by neurodevelopmental problems, with overlap between the two also evident (Law, 2013). It has been stated that as many as 50% of children in some areas of deprivation start school without the language they need for learning (Locke et al, 2002). In addition, in areas of social deprivation children and young people are more than twice as likely to have SLCN, with the likelihood rising to 2.3 times greater as being identified as having SLCN for children eligible for free school meals and living in areas of deprivation (Law et al, 2011).

It should be noted that social disadvantage does not inevitably lead to SLCN, however, it is a powerful risk factor, along with also being a risk factor for being involved in the criminal justice system. It has been found that young people from low income families fall behind peers by almost a year in terms of vocabulary at school entry. 55% of children starting school within identified social disadvantaged areas have delayed language and other identified SLCN. This compares to between 5 - 8% in general population of under 5-year olds (Locke et al, 2002).

The notion of intergenerational cycles of need has also been highlighted as potentially influencing links between SLCN and social disadvantage. Many adults living in poverty are stated to have not had the development of their communication skills supported previously, which in turn will affect their ability to support their children's communication development (Communication Council, 2015). This links to the notion that socially disadvantaged children tend to 'start from behind' in respect to communication competence and that subsequent social experiences only serve to exacerbate this disadvantage (Law et al. 2009). However, it should be noted that given the nature of some communication impairments, some young people will experience lasting SLCN, even if their psychosocial disadvantage can be ameliorated (Law et al, 2013).

## **2.7 The macro context: Key policy links**

Speech, language and communication have been evidenced to be critical to young people's development, however a historical lack of awareness led to national and local strategies that have been argued not to adequately incorporate the needs of young people with SLCN (Bercow Review, 2008).

The Bercow Review (2008) was the first key political document used to highlight the importance, at a national policy level of the effect of SLCN on young people and their life chances. The report focused on identifying the specific needs of the child with SLCN as well as recognising the importance of their contextual environment. That is, the impact



the environment has on a person in terms of where and how an individual plays, learns, communicates and lives. Three key issues formed the focus of the review:

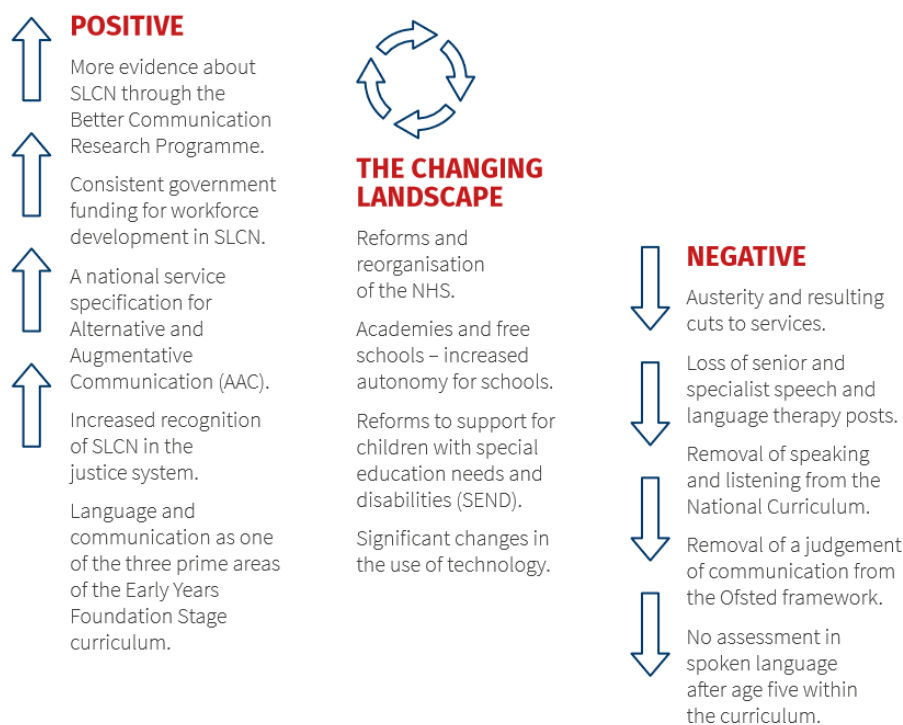
1. The range and composition of services needed to meet the communication needs of children and young people aged 0 – 19 years in an affordable way.
2. How planning and performance management arrangements together with better co-operation nationally and locally between health and education services can spur beneficial intervention.
3. What examples of best practice can be identified as templates for the wider roll-out of services across the country.

The report concluded with a number of recommendations focusing on the need to continue to highlight awareness of SLCN within the general population and improve access to services. Although the report included proposals to improve services for people with SLCN, it made very few specific recommendations in relation to 'how' these aims should be achieved. The review did however act as a catalyst for change, highlighting at a macro level the impact of SLCN on young people and their access to services and has sought to embed speech, language and communication in wider policy frameworks for the future.

There have been a number of significant policy led changes since the publication of the Berrow Review. Arguably the most significant being the Children and Families Act which has impacted upon educational reforms for children with special educational needs. ICAN (a national communications charity) & the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) produced a diagram of key changes linked to SLCN since 2008 (Figure 3) highlighting that although the review has prompted positive change, mainly through raising awareness of SLCN on a national scale, there is still work to be done in terms of ensuring SLCN is fully embedded within policies informing national practices.

ICAN and RCSLT (2018) concluded that there is a need for a national strategy for children and young people to ensure their needs are prioritised across government. Within the strategy, the importance of communication needs to be recognised, and consequently integrated into all plans for children and young people.

**Figure 3: Changes linked to SLCN since 2008**



(ICAN & RCSLT, 2018)

## 2.8 Development and Practice of Speech and Language Therapists

As highlighted previously, SLCN is a broad subject and although often viewed as a medical issue within academic research, the impacts of SLCN are far reaching, as described earlier in the chapter. In the main, correlations are seen with negative impacts on personal, social and educational experiences, social marginalisation of the individual (Markham & Dean, 2006; Snowing et al. 2001; Botting & Conti-Ramsden, 2004; Law et al, 2003; Voci et al. 2006), higher risk of social exclusion and bullying (Conti-Ramsden & Botting 2004, Fujiki et al. 2001), and a range of mental health problems including social anxiety and depression (Cohen, 2002) for example.

A common issue when looking at the literature on SLCN is the context within which it is being described. SLCN can be described from a medical perspective in terms of

diagnoses, from an educational perspective, where there are categories of special educational needs (Cross, 2011) and from a social perspective where it is seen as needing to be situated within universal services (ICAN & RCSLT, 2018).

Historically, speech and language as a profession has operated within what has often been termed the 'medical model' of disability (Llewellyn & Hogan, 2000). Where it has focused on diagnosing and treating specific problems and issues through the provision of individualised therapeutic services (Law et al, 2013). The early focus within SLCN concentrated on speech and stammering. However, more recently there has been a need to manage disorders of language learning, pragmatic disorders and disorders associated with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (Law et al, 2013), as health promotion practices have become a key focus of the NHS, and the ideals of 'prevention and enablement' influencing policies and translating into amended working practices (Ferguson, 2012). The speech and language therapy (SLT) profession has recognised this 'shift' in relation to the context for service delivery – medical to social (Gascoigne 2006), responding with an acknowledgement of the role that SLTs play within the public health agenda through the promotion of health in relation to communication (RCSLT, 2009).

In 1999 a number of SLT's started to move out of the medical context and become part of the operating team within local Sure Starts as a result of a cultural shift within national policy to a more holistic support approach for young people. This move signified on a national scale that speech and language services needed to be part of a wider universal service offer, and not just retained within the medical field. The move is thought to highlight the fundamental importance of communication skills and the upstream principles of early identification and intervention on a national scale (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008). In addition, the move also created a need to adapt the previously used medical based delivery model in order to meet the needs of the population. Law et al (2013, p490) summarises this move and the effect it has on SLT's:

*Many SLTs responded to Sure Start by adapting their model of intervention to what might be termed a public health model, striving to understand their population,*

*reaching out to subpopulations that might not otherwise access clinical services, and working in settings not traditionally associated with SLT (e.g. supermarkets and high street venues). Perhaps inevitably this led to awareness that there are far more children with low language skills than many had anticipated (Locke et al. 2002). SLT services were expanded in many areas in the UK to respond to Sure Start and subsequently many SLTs have continued to see their role in changing the child's communication environment as a key element of their practice (Dockrell et al. 2012).*

Within the Sure Start context, SLT input was incorporated within a wide variety of prevention-focused activities, categorised by the term 'health promotion'. These included running training courses, antenatal talks, information packs for parents for example (Fuller 2010). With the exception of these attempts to move into a more universal focus (i.e. Sure Start initiative), the SLT profession is still viewed to emphasise the individual element of SLCN rather than adopting a more public health focused perspective, of understanding the broader population through identification and understanding of the social factors which drive communication competence (Snow, 2009). Highlighting therefore a push/pull dynamic of the topic between both medical and social models. Ultimately, SLTs are based within the NHS and are accountable to a medical clinical supervision model.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

SLCN is defined within this thesis to mean a '*hindered ability in being able to understand others and/or make oneself understood*'. There is no single 'type' of SLCN and needs are presented on a continuum meaning that needs are very much individualised. Severe SLCN are often described as a pan disability issue and are interconnected with other presenting needs such as severe learning difficulty or profound and multiple learning difficulty, for example. Young people presenting with severe SLCN can be argued to be more easily identifiable than those with lower level needs. This is because, lower level SLCN are also often seen with other co-occurring conditions. However, instead of being viewed as part of the overall need the young person is experiencing, these additional needs often mask SLCN. Resulting therefore in the SLCN becoming 'hidden' within the range of complex needs the young person is experiencing. It is this hidden nature that

results in SLCN often being overlooked or attributed to other behaviours. For example, acting out within a classroom-based setting within school may be related to a young person not understanding what is being said to them, or not comprehending social norms of how they should behave within a given context. However, the exhibited behaviour is attributed to being rude and having a lack of respect for the school environment. It should be highlighted that SLCN are not the root of all non-confirming behaviours, but there are significant links between them.

SLCN has identified links with a number of wider micro level impacts, including; educational attainment, social skills and behavioural issues. The links between SLCN and these wider impacts are complex with compounding risk often being a key factor, linking a number of aspects.

As well as understanding the impact of SLCN at an individual, micro level in terms of how it effects engagement with young people, the importance of understanding and addressing SLCN has also been highlighted and pushed from a macro level through national reviews (i.e. Berrow Review) and policy initiatives such as Sure Start. This has seen to provide a catalyst for change in terms of moving SLCN from a medical model to a more social based model of delivery. The work within Sure Start and shift in emphasis for SLT's (similar to that in other areas of healthcare), from a clinical 'within child' focus to one grounded in public health principles has had a profound impact on the context within which children's SLT services are provided (Law et al, 2013) and subsequent developed delivery methods. For example, a number of YOS's throughout England have SLT's seconded into the team. This is still a relatively new approach and there is not a 'standard' delivery model of how this should be conducted or defined results of the impact such an initiative can have. This thesis, therefore explores the role of a SLT and the subsequent SLCN provision provided within a YOS, through a case study approach in order to uncover what such a delivery model should include.

The next chapter, Chapter 3: Placement of the Youth Offending Service continues the theme of providing background information by describing the other half of the substantive topic of this thesis; the YOS. It aims to provide an understanding as to the complexity of

the various contextual influences affecting delivery of a health-based initiative within a YOS setting. Chapter 4 then builds on these first two chapters by identifying and discussing the important links between SLCN and YOS providing the contextual background to the thesis.

### **3. Placement of the Youth Offending Service**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Youth Offending Services (YOS), or Teams (YOT) are multi-agency partnerships which are situated in local authorities with the remit to deliver youth justice services at a local level. They are accountable to the Youth Justice Board (YJB), a non-departmental public body established through the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with the statutory aim of preventing offending by children and young people (YJB, 2015).

YOS's provide the context in this thesis within which SLCN provision is provided. This chapter therefore provides a descriptive background of the placement of the YOS within England in order to situate the research. The chapter provides an account of the YOS, including the evolution of attitudes and approaches to youth crime and current thinking within the discipline. The following chapter (chapter 4) will then build on the information presented within this chapter and the preceding chapter (chapter 2) in order to discuss the importance of understanding and addressing SLCN within a youth offending population, and in particular the CDYOS.

#### **3.2 Governance and aims of the Youth Offending Service**

In order to appreciate the impact of the macro, national context of the YOS it is important to note its governance structure and the impact this has on service delivery. In line with the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), YOS's are statutory partnerships established within each local authority in England and Wales (YJB, 2010). They have responsibility for the assessment of, and to work with, young offenders who are serving part of their sentence in the community. YOS are often termed 'multi-agency' as Police, National Probation Service and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutorily required to assist in the funding and operation of YOS's. The need for multi-agency working in terms of YOS's could be suggested to be a nod towards the growing enthusiasm within the UK for whole

system working, which has arisen from a recognition that many of the problems that public services now deal with are too complex to be addressed by one agency acting in isolation – they are ‘wicked’ problems (Rittel and Webber, 1973).

The principle aim of the YOS is to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people. As such the following objectives for YOS’s were set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998;

- The swift administration of justice so that every young person accused of breaking the law has the matter resolved without delay; confronting young offenders with the consequences of their offending, for themselves and their family, their victims and their community, and helping them to develop a sense of personal responsibility;
- Intervention which tackles the particular factors (personal, family, social, educational or health) that put the young person at risk of offending and which strengthens ‘protective factors’;
- Punishment proportionate to the seriousness and persistence of offending;
- Encouraging reparation to victims by young offenders; and
- Reinforcing the responsibilities of parents

The directives of the YOS are dictated at a macro level by Parliament and the dominant political powers. All YOS are governed by the YJB, who set guidance on the governance and expected performance measures of each service from national level. However, YOS’s are situated within, and accountable to the Local Authority. This therefore allows for some degree of flexibility to be exercised by the Local Authority (at meso level) in respect to configuring the service to best meet the needs of the local population. In doing so, at this meso level, staff within the Local Authority and YOS are seen to adapt and reflect their practices and behaviours to specific norms of engagement seen within the context of their geographical reach. Behaviours and practices are shaped by cultural conventions and shared meanings, routines, cultural representations, and the unspoken rules that govern appropriate behaviour in different social contexts within the context of the particular local authority. Therefore, although all YOS’s share the same national guidance, individual authority organisation and delivery can be adapted to reflect local



need. This application of knowledge at the local level is highly dependent on context and involves the ‘messy engagement of multiple players with diverse sources of knowledge’ (Davies et al, 2008). Sausman et al (2016) draw on the concept of ‘local universality’ to similarly describe the process whereby general rules, products or guidelines are shaped and tailored to fit into local contexts and enacted within practices. The necessity of acknowledging the local context in defining and shaping local services goes against traditional positivist views whereby social phenomena is thought to be divorced from its context (Sayer, 1992). Instead a complexity informed view acknowledging the importance of each of the components of the system can be helpful in providing an understanding of the shape of locally delivered services (see Chapter 5 for further discussion on complexity).

At a micro (i.e. individual) level the specific interactions between the young people engaged in the YOS and the staff will have a direct impact upon the services received and the experience of the young person. This is also influenced by the fact that the young people who engage with YOS’s often have a number of needs, often being described as ‘complex’. Taylor (2016) suggested that the young people YOS’s work with are;

*‘...in general, those whose offending is a manifestation of a number of things that are going wrong in their lives. These children are often victims of crime as well as perpetrators, and many are in care or known to social services. Many have poor records of school attendance and educational achievement; learning and communication difficulties are common; and many have poor mental and physical health or are on the autistic spectrum. These children require a carefully considered and coordinated response from a number of partners, making the link between YOTs, children’s, health and education services all the more critical if the root causes of offending are to be addressed.’ (Taylor, 2016 p 7).*

### **3.3 Evolution of attitudes and approaches to youth crime**

Attitudes and approaches to youth crime have evolved over the years. Youth crime is not a static isolated concept. It is framed within the contextual considerations of society and as such is influenced, adapted and shaped by prevailing cultures and ideologies. To this effect it is important to consider effects at different levels; Macro (national); Meso

(local authority); and Micro (the individual) and how these have changed over time. This structural perspective of the YOS context is of particular relevance when looking at the incorporation of a health-based service (speech, language and communication) into the youth criminal justice system as national policies will influence service design as well as setting national guidelines and targets which need to be followed and met. Overall, the national focus on youth crime has substantial implications for the prevailing culture and attitudes within the YOS, if SLCN related initiatives are to be introduced successfully.

'Youth offending' was first termed as such in the 19th century, and relates to young people who have been convicted or cautioned for a criminal offense (Case 2018). It is a '*...messy, complex and contested area...*' (Smith 2007), which has experienced dramatic changes in its focus and implementation over recent decades. These changes have shaped the YOS we see today.

The reported incidence of youth offending began to rise rapidly in the late 1990's, illustrated in the media through a number of high-profile crimes (Haines & Case, 2018). The most prominent of these cases was the abduction and murder of toddler James Bulger by two ten-year-old boys in 1993. Following this event, media and public backlash against young people, brought youth crime to the centre of public attention and hardened political attitudes to young offenders and influenced justice policy for decades as a result (Phoenix, 2015). As a consequence of the increased media attention and a resulting hardening of public opinion towards young offender's, youth crime became a high political focus and became susceptible to the whims of politicians and populist calls for punishment (Smith 2007, 2011, Pitts 2001).

The ideological conditions of the 1990's provided the driving force for a number of changes in youth justice with the size and scale of the YJS increasing considerably from 1992 through to 2007. The soundbite '*Tough on crime, tough on causes of crime*' with its focus on crime reduction and youth crime became synonymous with the Labour party, in their victory in the 1997 General Election (McLaughlin et al, 2001). It was suggested in Labour's pre-election consultation document, '*Tackling Youth Crime: Reforming Youth Justice*', that there was a crisis in youth justice and that the system was in need of a

radical overhaul. The White Paper, *'No More Excuses: A new approach to tackling youth crime'* (Home Office, 1997), presented New Labour's proposals which were later enacted in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and included the introduction of YOS. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 is thought to have introduced the most significant reform to date of the British youth justice system and led to what has been described as *'the new youth justice'* (Goldson, 2001).

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, established the YJB at a national level, and subsequent YOS to deliver youth justice services at a local level. This approach has been stated to have swept away the 'old youth justice' and introduced a new managed national system for governing 'troublesome youths' (Phoenix, 2015). The new system had a different outlook on the structuring and focus of youth justice from previous models and fell into line with the current political ideological principles of the time (Phoenix, 2015). Historically, youth justice teams had predominately consisted of social workers. However, through the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, YOS's were set up to include multi-agency representatives, including police, probation service, education and drug and alcohol misuse services. This new approach was underpinned by strategies of punitiveness, criminalisation, responsabilisation and interventionism with a focus on the offence and the offender (as opposed to the whole child) and was illustrated through a model of risk-focused intervention, known as the 'Risk Factor Prevention Paradigm' (RFPP) (Farrington, 2007).

The processes aligned with the Youth Justice System (YJS) and its focus on risk have been criticised as marginalising the voices of young offenders through unequal power relations, with engagement in the system being described as a disempowering and disengaging experience for the young people involved (Haines and Case 2015; Case and Haines 2015). Indeed, the YJS has been described as more 'controlling' than 'caring' and 'stubbornly blind' when it concerned a child's welfare and less concerned with age appropriateness and child friendliness (Fionda 1998).

2008 onwards has seen a shift in the focus of youth justice. In 2008, a protocol was agreed between the Department for Education, the Home Office and the Association of

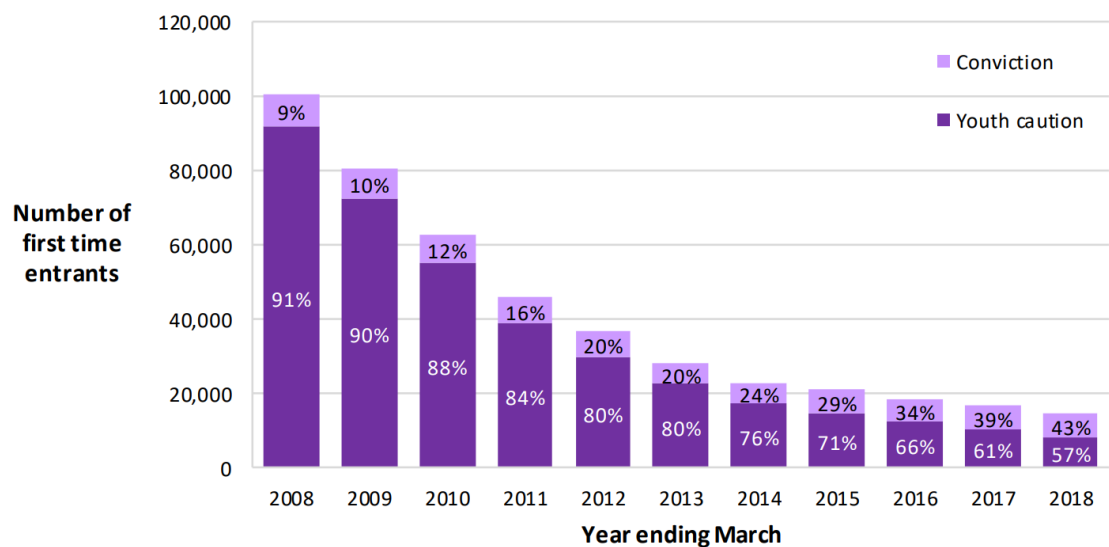
Chief Police Officers (now the National Police Chiefs' Council) which permitted the police to deal with minor incidents involving children, notwithstanding that they amount to a notifiable offence, without a crime having to be recorded (Taylor, 2016). In addition, 2008 also saw the publication of the Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP), which committed the government to achieving a reduction in the number of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time by 20% by 2020.

There has been a move away at a national political level from the risk focused nature of the RFPP. This has been achieved primarily through the introduction of AssetPlus. AssetPlus is an assessment and planning intervention framework which was developed by the YJB to replace the previously used risk focussed Asset tool following consultation with stakeholders in response to comments that it was out of date (note the previous case management system Asset had been in operation for 14 years). AssetPlus aims to provide a holistic end-to-end assessment and intervention plan, which allows for one record to follow a young person throughout their time in the youth justice system. The tool is less risk-focused and builds in scope for practitioners connected to the young person to assess foundations for change, desistance mechanisms, strengths, the voices/perspectives of young people and to utilise professional discretion (YJB 2013). Within the AssetPlus tool there is a screening question which asks if the young person has a SLCN, highlighting the importance placed on identifying this need.

More recently 'diversion' which includes a positive, promotional approach to preventative activity and a youth justice process informed and shaped by children's meaningful and legitimate participation and engagement has seen a rise to prominence within contemporary youth justice practice (Case et al, 2015). This is thought to suggest a reorientation of policy towards the pursuance of young people's rights, needs, quality of life and positive outcomes (Case et al, 2015). This move also 'fits' with the notion of the YOS as being positioned to assist with enhancing a young person's life prospects through addressing broader needs they may have. All these changes to the youth justice system have had significant impact on the number of first-time entrants into the system where substantial reductions have been observed. In the year ending March 2018 there were around 14,400 first time entrants to the Youth Justice System. This has fallen by

86% since the year ending March 2008, and a 14% fall in seen since the year ending March 2017 (Youth Justice Board, 2019).

*Figure 4: First time entrants to the Youth Justice System, England and Wales, years ending March 2008 to 2018*



(Youth Justice Board, 2019 p11)

Youth justice has been seen to oscillate between the ‘caring ethos of social services and the neoliberalistic ethos of responsibility and punishment’ over the years (Muncie and Hughes 2002). As youth justice is an area of national policy, it can be argued to be largely dependent on political imperatives with respect to which approach is favoured. This therefore is seen to result in policies which are shaped by the political rhetoric of punitiveness (Morgan 2012). The prevailing political will is therefore a key consideration when looking to develop working practices within the YOS.

At present, the prevailing culture within youth offending is influenced by a key political paper published in 2016 – The Taylor Review (explored in more detail within section 3.4). The Taylor review (2016 p8) was explicit in stating that a coordinated approach to working with young people is needed in order to ‘*rehabilitate these children*’ and to ‘*repair and enhance their life prospects*’. The coordinated approach referenced highlighted the role that health and education are to play in order to bring about significant impacts in

terms of both the welfare and rehabilitation of the young person. This move to incorporating a broader spectrum of services which meet and address the wider social needs of the young people connected to the criminal justice system is not new, it follows a trend seen in a number of other countries, for example Belgium, Finland and Norway (Hazel, 2008). Early childhood experiences, including, neglect, abuse, family maladjustment and trauma all impact on probability of involvement with youth crime. Therefore, a more welfare-based approach to youth offending services, incorporating initiatives to address wider needs, aims to prevent further offending through the framing of offending behaviour being identified as a symptom of unmet childhood needs (Crittenden, 1995).

This shift towards a rehabilitation focus looking to *'repair and enhance... life prospects'* fits with the notion of providing additional support services, whereby SLCN are able to be addressed alongside other diversionary activities delivered within the context of the YOS (chapter 4 expands more on the provision of additional activities within a YOS setting).

### **3.4 Current thinking within Youth Offending Services**

Building on the information above in relation to the historical context of the YOS, this section looks to describe the current thinking within YOS's in order to understand the current context within which SLCN provision is going to be placed, and therefore the outputs it may impact upon.

As highlighted previously, in 2015 Charlie Taylor was asked to lead a departmental review of the youth justice system for the Ministry of Justice which culminated in a key publication which has shaped current thinking within youth justice. The Review and Government's response were published on 12 December 2016 and made recommendations for extensive reform of the youth justice system including devolution, courts, sentencing and custody.

Within the report two main structural recommendations were presented which have since shaped YOS delivery: diversionary Children's Panels following sentencing by the Youth Court, and educational Secure Schools to replace custodial institutions (Taylor 2016). Both of which place emphasis on rehabilitation rather than punishment.

Two key factors that have had, and continue to have a significant impact on the development of YOS were identified within the report (YJB, 2015, Taylor 2016):

- The reduction in the number of children and young people in the youth justice system
- The reduction in public spending on youth justice services

Over the last decade there has been a decline in the number of young people in the youth justice system. Figure 6 above highlights the number of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system and shows the trend of reduced numbers of young people within the youth justice system.

The fall in numbers of young people entering the criminal justice system has been linked to a number of reasons. Possible societal and social drivers include the fact that overall crime has been falling in England and Wales since the mid-1990s, prevention programmes, such as Sure Start and Family Intervention programmes, to support vulnerable families have been introduced and there has been an increase in prevention work undertaken by YOS's with young people who were perceived to be at risk of offending (Sutherland et al, 2017). In addition, changes in criminal justice processes and decision making could also be suggested as influencing falling numbers of young people within the criminal justice system. Sutherland et al (2017) state that;

*'...the fact that the changes occurred over a relatively short period of time, strongly suggests that the main driver was a change in criminal justice processes and/or decision making.'* (p2)

The change in criminal justice processes highlighted above relate to the increase of police discretion to divert young people who commit low-level crime away from the formal youth justice system. At the level of local practice an expansion of diversionary schemes

has been seen (Phoenix, 2015). As a result of these factors, local authorities are having to reassess if current service delivery models still meet the needs of a smaller, more challenging cohort of children who offend, and whether these services can be provided more efficiently (Taylor, 2016).

Many YOS's have shrunk in size, this could be argued to be attributed to either reduction in budgets or reduction in service need, following decreasing numbers of young people requiring the services. At the macro level of central government, it has been stated that there are now far fewer targets by which YOS's are held to account, and that the remaining targets are focused on producing system contraction (Phoenix, 2015). Decreasing numbers requiring engagement with YOS's could also be linked to a 'cooling down' of the political rhetoric regarding youth crime with an expansion in the use of schemes diverting young people out of youth courts (Loader and Sparks 2010). However, some have described the current youth justice system at a 'point of crisis', for the fact that it is expected to be '...effective, efficient and economical, but with less money, fewer staff with fewer resources, less time and larger caseloads – all at a time of intense political and socio-economic uncertainty' (Haines & Case, 2018).

The profile of young people entering the youth criminal justice system has changed over recent years. It is perceived that, following the reduction of young people in the system seen over the past couple of years, the young people left in the system are those who present with the most complex and challenging needs (YJB, 2015). In addition, the average number of previous offences for each young person in the youth justice system has risen each year since 2006/07 (YJB, 2015). This shift in the profile of young people engaging with the YOS impacts upon the services and interventions delivered by the YOS in order that the young people's needs continue to be met.

Due to current political and financial pressures faced by Councils throughout England, YOS's have increasingly more closely integrated with other local authority services (YJB, 2015). The YJB expects that;

*'...the future of youth justice services would see: closer integration with other services delivered by the local authority; more working across local government*



*boundaries; and a continued focus on early intervention, prevention and family-based services.'* (YJB, 2015 p26).

It was suggested within the Taylor review (2016) that a key strength of the youth justice system has been the delivery of multi-disciplinary services through YOS's. However, as a consequence of the new professional identity of the YOS as incorporating a number of individual services such as youth work, health, education etc., some staff have become alienated from other local authority services and viewed to operate within a silo (Taylor, 2016). The resulting actions meaning that assistance from other departments such as social care, education, housing or health for a child who needs a coordinated response are difficult or even denied. To this effect, YOS's have had to assess current delivery models and look at new innovative ways of working in order to address identified need (Taylor, 2016).

As well as the target population and financial resources changing, cultural shifts have been seen at a local level within YOS from the need to change working practices, and at a national level within the YJB. Discourse in youth justice has become dominated by the mantra of 'evidence-based' policy (see Gatti and Verde 2002; Walgrave 2002; Muncie and Goldson 2006; McAra & McVie, 2007). It has been suggested that from the 'nothing works' pessimism of the 1970s, a shift to 'scientific realism' stressing that a combination of rational planning, 'evidence-based' research and crime and disorder audits will assist to identify 'what works' in preventing youth crime and reducing rates of re-offending (Muncie, 2001). This shift has seen principles and interventions 'borrowed' and redefined within a youth justice context from around the world to trial and evidence new effective ways of working (Muncie, 2001). This shift has seen new interventions (such as restorative justice) becoming the norm within youth criminal justice. In response to this influx of new interventions, the YJB now has a comprehensive 'effective practice library' (available at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/youth-justice/effective-practice-library>) available online to disseminate information on effective practices/approaches to working with young offenders.

The notion of 'evidenced-based' policy has become prominent theme in a number of public service fields, producing a robust evidence base providing politicians and

commissioners reassurance that they are providing services that are seen 'to work'. However, the practical application of an evidenced-based approach can be viewed to be problematic. Public services deal with complex social interventions within a complex social environment (Pawson et al, 2005). Therefore, whilst this approach has seen a number of innovative interventions and ways of work adopted, it must be understood that what works in one area may not be able to simply be 'picked up' and transposed elsewhere due to differences in cultural and social contexts within which the measures are to be implemented (Muncie 2002; Muncie and Goldson 2006, McAra & McVie, 2007). It is important therefore to understand how complex service interventions are constructed and how they can be interpreted in order to identify how they can be reconfigured to meet the needs of new audiences.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

Youth crime and justice is a politically volatile area which can change quickly (McCarthy, 2014). Over the past two decades there has been a shift in focus of the prevailing political context surrounding youth offending services. Within this time there has been a move towards a focus on rehabilitation, aiming to reduce re-offending by enhancing the life prospects of young people within the criminal justice system rather than through punishment. This change in context has coincided with a reduction of the numbers of young people engaging with the criminal justice system. Whilst it cannot be said with any degree of certainty that the move towards more diversionary activities and focus on the wellbeing of young people has led to reduction in people engaging with the criminal justice system, there are strong suggestions of correlation.

The shift in focus of the youth criminal justice system to a more rehabilitation focused approach opens the door for complimentary services such as speech, language and communication provision to be delivered within the YOS. However, caution must be exercised as it has been shown that the political will of the dominant party within England has a significant role to play in determining the focus and objectives of the YOS.

This chapter has described the context of the YOS in terms of the importance of the macro political climate which has significant bearing on the services delivered as part of the YOS. Chapter four will build on this chapter by seeking to explore the association between SLCN and Youth Justice in order to identify the placement of SLCN within a YOS setting.

## **4. Association between SLCN and the YOS: Identifying potential service strategies**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The previous two chapters have explored SLCN and the placement of the YOS. This chapter will draw on the previous two through bringing together impacts of SLCN in terms of how these (and related) needs can affect the way in which young people are able to effectively engage with the YOS. As this thesis is primarily concerned with the question of whether the incorporation of speech, language and communication provision within a youth offending setting can improve outcomes for young people engaging with the YOS, this focus on provision of SLCN to enable engagement with the service is threaded through this chapter.

By identifying and understanding the implications of SLCN on a young person's engagement with YOS, service developments can begin to be identified in order to ensure all young people are able to effectively engage with the YOS.

The chapter is split into three key areas. Firstly, the impact SLCN has on engagement with the YOS is explored in order to understand potential impacts at an individual, micro level. The notion of risk factors is discussed highlighting correlation between youth offending and SLCN related risk factors. It then builds on this understanding through exploring how SLCN impacts on engagement at a YOS meso level in terms of service conditions. The chapter concludes with a hypothesis in the form of an initial programme theory as to what impact SLCN provision within a YOS setting may have. This initial programme theory is then used to guide the remainder of the research (see chapter 5, for further discussion on programme theories).

## **4.2 Impact of SLCN on engagement with the YOS: The micro level**

Contact with the YJS exposes young people to a range of experiences, including police interviews, court proceedings and therapeutic intervention programs for example, that draw heavily on expressive and receptive language skills (Lavigne & Van Rybroek, 2011). If a young person therefore lacks the ability to accurately receive information conveyed to them, such as legal rights and responsibilities, or the ability to clearly express themselves, this can cause major consequences. Indeed, article 7 of the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights states that barriers to communication affect an individual's ability to access justice systems.

### ***The size of the issue: Prevalence of SLCN within youth offending populations***

Prevalence estimates of the proportion of young people with SLCN vary as highlighted in Chapter 2. The Bercow Review (2008) estimated that 10% of the general population have some level of SLCN. Hughes et al. (2012) consolidates prevalence figures from a number of reports to give an estimate of 5 – 7% of the general population having a communication disorder (Note: Communication disorders relate to problems with speech, language and hearing that significantly impact upon an individual's academic achievement or day-to-day social interactions and so can be likened therefore to SLCN). Comparisons to young people in custody are also made. The prevalence for communication disorders rises to 60 – 90% within this population (see table 3), illustrating strong correlation between SLCN and criminal behaviours.

*Table 3: Prevalence of neurodevelopment disorders amongst young people in the general population and in custody*

<b>Neurodevelopment disorder</b>	<b>Reported prevalence rates amongst young people in the general population</b>	<b>Reported prevalence rates amongst young people in custody</b>
Traumatic brain injury	24 - 31.6%	65.2 - 72.1%
Communication disorders	5 - 7%	60 - 90%
Dyslexia	10%	43 - 57%
Learning disabilities	2 - 4%	23 - 32%
Autistic spectrum disorder	0.6 - 1.2%	15%
Attention deficit hyperactive disorder	1.7 - 9%	12%
Foetal alcohol syndrome	0.1 - 5%	10.9 - 11.7%
Epilepsy	0.45 - 1%	0.7 - 0.8%

*Source: Hughes et al., 2012*

The high prevalence of SLCN within offending populations does not exist solely within youth populations. It has been widely recognised that people with SLCN are significantly overrepresented within the adult prison population also. Around 50% of the adult prison population are believed to have literacy difficulties of some description (Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists, 2010).

Increased prevalence of SLCN within offender populations suggests that these needs could be considered as a risk factor for offending (Bryan, 2015). This risk could be direct (i.e. SLCN is considered a risk factor in its own right) or stem from links to other risks, such as vulnerability from compromised literacy, and the risks of low levels of language and literacy for educational achievement for example (Snow 2009). The links highlighted here can be understood in terms of ‘compounding risk’ where low levels of language lead to other risks associated with offending behaviours.

### ***SLCN and links with identified youth offending risk factors***

Risk factors are the individual and societal factors which predict future delinquency (Case & Haines, 2014). They are identified and used with the notion that if ‘...*factors in the lives of young people that have been shown to predict and cause future offending can be changed or mitigated then delinquency can be averted or prevented.*’ (Case & Haines, 2014 p226). This risk factor framework seeks to identify conditions or variables which will pose a ‘risk’ to a young person, thus increasing the probability of delinquency and/or criminal justice system contact (Belcher & Shinitzky, 1998). A risk factor can be defined there as anything that increases the probability that a person will suffer harm. Protective factors are also identified in opposition to risk factors. These identify conditions or variables with ‘protective’ properties which serve to ameliorate or otherwise modify the effects of the risk factors (Belcher & Shinitzky, 1998).

The idea of using risk factors has become increasingly popular as a method used to explore the origins and development of youth offending and for informing interventions developed to prevent criminal potential of an individual (Farrington, 2000).

To date, youth justice policy in England has been principally concerned with the prevention of offending and re-offending (see chapter 3 for discussion of YOS). This has been conceptualised around understandings of ‘risk’ (Hughes, 2012). Recent government research has therefore focused on identifying background and/or lifestyle factors that are linked to youth crime and identified risk factors assisting in the prediction of future offending (Farrington, 2002).

It should be noted, just because a young person may exhibit a risk factor, it does not mean that they will go on to engage in delinquent and/or criminal behaviour. Indeed, Brownlie et al’s (2004) longitudinal study illustrates language impairment as a risk factor for offending, however, causal relationships have not been established.

Risk factors are not viewed to operate in isolation, typically they are seen as cumulative and the more risk factors that a young person is exposed to, the greater likelihood that

they will experience negative outcomes (including behaviours resulting in contact with the criminal justice system) (Kendziora & Osher, 2004). In addition, risk factors experienced from a number of domains (individual; familial; peer; school; and community) will increase the risk of a young person offending (Hawkins et al., 2000, Campbell & Harrington, 2000; Liddle & Solanki, 2000; Farrington, 2000b; Hoge, Andrews & Leschied, 1996). Risk factors are stated to hold more significant influence over young people at different points in their development. Peer risk factors, for example, typically occur later in development than individual and family factors (Kendziora & Osher, 2004).

The notion of risk factors is an important concept when considering the impact of SLCN as many risk factors for SLCN and offending are connected.

### ***Impact of SLCN on risk factors***

The situations young people find themselves in as a consequence of their SLCN can often increase the likelihood of experiencing risk factors in terms of engagement with the criminal justice system. For example, in terms of individual impacts it has already been noted how SLCN can often contribute to a young person becoming isolated and socially marginalised (Markham & Dean, 2006; Snowling et al. 2001; Botting, N. and Conti-Ramsden, 2004; Law et al., 2003; Voci et al. 2006, cited in Snow & Sanger, 2011). Another significant contributory risk factor experienced, is that young people with SLCN often do not have the breath, or depth to their education that peers who do not experience these difficulties have (Snowling, Adams, Bishop, & Stothard, 2001 cited in Games, 2012). Because speech and language skills are such an important part of achieving academic success, they are a key feature in mitigating risk factors (Snow & Powell, 2004).

It is acknowledged that young people engaging in criminal activity typically have a history of poor school achievement, learning difficulties and truancy. In addition, they are likely to disengage early from the education system (Putnins 1999, Snowling et al. 2000, cited in Bryan et al 2007). This disengagement has been suggested to have two main



consequences; (1) reduces the chances available of acquiring skills which promote success in the workplace; and (2) reduces the extent to which the school environment can provide a protective factor through the presence of prosocial role models and values (Snow, 2010). This can further exacerbate the risk of ongoing social marginalisation. Hughes et al. (2012) illustrates the process of disengagement from school with a quote from a case study;

*'it got harder'*

*'I went to like a junior school, I couldn't read or write and they just gave me work what I can't do, telling me to do it, and I couldn't do it, so instead of doing it I would just mess about.'*

In relation to risk factors, the failure to acquire language skills has been linked to the emergence of non-verbal aggressive behaviours (Sanger et al., 2000), and it has been suggested that challenging behaviours can serve as communicative functions in students with language and learning difficulties (Mouridsen & Hauschild, 2009). In addition, delayed language development has been identified as an important risk factor for violent antisocial behaviour in adolescence (Smart et al., 2003).

In terms of social engagement, young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds are noted to face an elevated risk of undiagnosed language impairments and this can translate into life-long social and economic disadvantage (Law & Elliot, 2009).

The situations young people find themselves in as a result of their SLCN often increase the number of risk factors they exhibit. Therefore it can be argued that the possibility of a young person with a SLCN coming in to contact with the youth criminal justice system is elevated. Indeed, the statistics presented in above show the increased probability of a young person in custody having a SLCN compared to the general population (60-90% vs. 10%, Hughes et al., 2012) to confirm this viewpoint.

### ***Social disadvantage***

Young people in the YJS come from a variety of backgrounds, however many have grown up in circumstances of social disadvantage including socio-economic deprivation,

have been placed within care settings (i.e. foster care) and have experienced academic disengagement (Loeber & Farrington, 2000; Maschi, Hatcher, Schwalbe, & Rosato, 2008) (all of which are identified risk factors).

Interactions between care-giver and young person have been explored in low socio-economic environments, where poor parental supervision and management techniques have been shown to be evident which play a part in the development of antisocial behaviour in young people (Sousa et al., 2011). In addition, research has also suggested that patterns, such as inconsistent use of discipline and reduced use of effective monitoring are associated with delinquency (Sampson & Laub, 1995) (see chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion on factors linked to youth offending behaviours).

Alongside links between social disadvantage and offending, links between social disadvantage and SLCN are evidenced. Research has indicated that young people from low socio-economic status backgrounds may have their developmental experiences impeded through caregivers being less likely to communicate in ways which contribute to language development (Hoff, 2003) (see chapter 2 for a more in-depth discussion on SLCN). As a consequence, young people from low socio-economic backgrounds are overrepresented in terms of both the developmental experiences of young people who offend and linked to less enriched early language environments (Roy, Chiat, & Dodd, 2014). This has led to social disadvantage being termed a 'powerful risk factor' (Law, 2013).

Linked to this social disadvantage, research has suggested that young people engaged with the YJS are also more likely than the general population to have executive function deficits (Beaver, DeLisi, Vaughn, & Wright, 2010), intellectual impairment (Haysom, et al., 2014), mental health problems (Anckarsäter et al., 2007), substance abuse issues (Lenningset al., 2006), and traumatic brain injury (Haysom et al., 2014), all of which are also linked with increased susceptibility of developing SLCN (see chapter 2 for further discussion).

## ***Education***

Young people who offend are more likely, than their non-offending peers to experience fewer years in education (as a result of school absence, school exclusion or leaving school early), which can subsequently impact on their language and literacy development (Snow et al. 2014). In addition, this reduced educational attainment increases the risk of poor psychosocial adaptation and social marginalisation.

The association between language and literacy (Snow et al. 2014) shows that young people with developmental language and literacy disorders are more likely to fall behind their peers and disengage from school education, especially where language skills such as expository discourse are central to the school curriculum content (Nippold et al. 2008). Young people with delayed language development are also more likely to be excluded by their typically developing peers, thus increasing the risk of further school disengagement and offending behaviour (Snow and Powell 2008).

## ***SLCN and its links with identified behavioural difficulties***

The relationship between behavioural difficulties and SLCN is particularly significant, in the fact that conduct disorder elevates the probability of becoming involved with the youth criminal justice system. Indeed, two-thirds of seven to 14 years olds with severe behaviour problems were found to have communication needs in a study by Cohen et al (cited in RCSLT, 2012). In addition, there is also strong evidence to link SLCN with challenging and antisocial behaviour, but this may be partly due to hidden communication difficulties being labelled as behavioural problems (Beitchman et al 2001)

It is widely recognised that young people who become engaged in the youth justice system often have problematic social and economic histories (Snow & Sanger, 2011, Bryan, 2004). In addition, there is a growing body of literature indicating that typically

when looking at a population identified on the basis of their behaviour or their communication, then it is likely half will also have emotional and behavioural difficulties or SLCN (Camarata & Nelson, 1992; Cohen et al, 1998; Benner 2002; Gilmour et al, 2004, cited in Law & Elliot, 2009, Beitchman et al, 1996 & 1999; Dockrell, 2014; Games et al. 2012; Bryan, 2007). These emotional and/or behavioural difficulties exhibited by young people with a SLCN may either be directly linked to their particular SLCN, for example not being able to verbally make themselves understood to their peers, or they may be linked to the environment or social context within which they operate, which may serve to exacerbate the biological problems connected to their SLCN (Hughes et al., 2012).

Research has suggested the overlap between behaviour and communication is a critical feature of the profile of many young offenders (Law & Elliot, 2009, Cohen et al. 1993, van Daal et al. 2007, Lindsay and Dockrell 2000, Lundervold et al. 2008, Mackie and Law 2010, cited in Snow & Sanger, 2011; Clegg et al, 1999 cited in Bryan, 2004, Law & Elliot, 2009). An elevated risk of detachment from school as a result of a young person coping with their SLCN (through disaffection, truancy or exclusion) has been suggested to increase the risk of offending through the creation of delinquent peer groups (Stevenson, 2006, Hughes et al., 2012). Thus it can be suggested that it is not the SLCN that is creating an increased likelihood of demonstrating delinquent behaviours, but that the context surrounding the young person and the mechanisms they are engaging, as a direct result of their SLCN is heightening their chances of exhibiting delinquent behaviour and thus coming into contact with the criminal justice system.

Violence and other delinquent behaviours exhibited by young people with SLCN have been suggested to reflect people's adaptations to situations where communication levels required within the situation exceed people's own linguistic resources (Redmond & Rice, cited in Brownlie, 2004). Bryan (2004) highlights through case studies how some young offenders use violence as a mechanism to express themselves when experiencing difficulties in making their needs known or in response to bullying from others. In addition, it has been suggested that delinquent behaviours may provide an alternative way of obtaining peer acceptance and 'connectedness' for young people who are not able to

fully express themselves through speech (Mouridsen and Hauschild, 2009; Maccoby, 1986, Zoccolillo, 1993 cited in Brownlie, 2004).

It must be remembered that this cohort of young people can be particularly vulnerable, due to their lack of social skills as a direct result from a SLCN. Hughes et al. (2012) suggests that a 'social naivety' as a direct result from a SLCN (i.e. not being able to 'read' social situations and people correctly) may influence young people to engage in criminal or antisocial behaviour either through a lack of understanding about what they are doing or through a desire to be accepted by peers.

It must be noted however, that although there are strong links between behavioural conduct disorders in childhood and SLCN, the nature of the relationship (correlational due to shared risk factors versus causal in one or both directions) is still to be determined (Law and Plunkett 2009, Law et al. 2009, cited in Snow & Sanger, 2011). Law & Elliot (2009) describe how the association between communication and behaviour is likely to be highly sensitive to other experiences the young person has had and highlight an example that specific aspects of a child's behaviour interact with verbal ability to enhance the risk of mental health problems, most commonly anxiety and depression but also aggression and an inability to negotiate with peers and others (Law & Elliot, 2009). This therefore comes back to the notion of the context within which the young person is operating as having a direct impact upon their behavioural choices and subsequent outcomes as a result of the actions (mechanisms) they employ.

It is not always evident that a young person has a SLCN. Because behaviour is in essence, a very visible characteristic, it can often mask and hide other traits, including the exhibition of SLCN. Games et al. (2012) provide the example of a child with a SLCN who has difficulties following instructions may be perceived as stubborn and non-compliant by others, when really they just do not understand what is being asked of them. Also, Sanger et al. (2003, cited in Bryan 2007) describes how incarcerated young females with language difficulties were often labelled as 'lazy' or 'out of control' by staff. It has been suggested that teachers often perceive pupils' behaviour as being as a result of conduct as opposed to underlying language difficulties (Beitchman et al., 1999). This

'misdiagnosis' can result in behavioural issues being addressed, whilst the underlying SLCN, which is impacting on behaviour, to be overlooked.

It is often speculated that comorbidity of language and behavioural issues tends to result in a disproportionate 'favouring' of being labelled as a behavioural issue when allocating and delivering of intervention services is considered (Cohen et al. 1993, cited in Bryan, 2007, Beitchman et al. 1996, & Beitchman et al, 1999 cited in Games et. al, 2012, Bryan, 2007). This may therefore result in high risk young people receiving services aimed at addressing and adjusting their behaviour without consideration given to their SLCN.

#### **4.3 Impact of SLCN on engagement with criminal justice processes: the meso level**

Moving from the individual micro level influences described above, the meso level YOS is now considered in relation to how it impacts on the engagement of young people with SLCN within the YOS.

Although there are a significant proportion of young people engaged with the criminal justice system that have SLCN, there are many obstacles that these young people face as a result of SLCN that have not been directly addressed (note, these will vary depending on the individualistic nature of SLCN). As suggested by the social model of disability, environmental or social processes can exacerbate difficulties caused by the initial impairment (Hughes et al., 2012). These processes can include for example, young offenders with poor narrative skills being disadvantaged with respect to 'information transfer' demanded during police interview or a court-room cross-examination (Snow and Powell, 2011, Hughes et al., 2012). The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (2012) also state how many people have difficulty understanding commonly used vocabulary within the justice system, including words such as 'victim' and 'breach'. Lanz (2009) notes how young people without SLCN often request clarification and will persevere with tasks they find difficult, however, those young people with SCLN rarely indicate that they have not understood or need help; instead just giving up.

### ***The importance of narrative within the YJS***

The ability to produce a coherent narrative is one aspect of expressive language that is regarded as important for a variety of settings, including the YJS (Snow and Powell 2008). Narrative involves the ability to structure coherently and convey information from a real or fictional story of events in a chronological order. This type of narrative is important in situations such as police interviews where the young person may need to provide their own account of a situation, or in a court setting where they again need to provide their own account of events.

Research has found that young people who offend, tend to perform poorly on assessments of narrative discourse (Snow and Powell 2008). This links to the high prevalence estimates within the youth offending population who are viewed to have some sort of SLCN.

Expository discourse is defined as language that conveys knowledge of technical and factual information specific to a given topic (Bliss 2002). This type of discourse is required for successful engagement with the YJS where young people who offend are expected to describe cause and effect and coherently verbalise their understanding of contractual rules, correct legal procedures and specific terminology incorporated within in court proceedings (Communications Trust 2014, Snow et al. 2012).

### ***Successful engagement with the YJS***

The successful participation in justice intervention programs often relies on a variety of language skills; again putting a young person with SLCN at a disadvantage (Sanger & Maag, 1994). If these 'mechanisms' delivered by criminal justice services are not reframed to take into account an individuals need, or if interventions/services to assist with specific SLCN (mechanisms) are not provided for these young people there is a significant risk of the young people not being able to fully engage in the criminal justice processes which can impact upon, and lead to repetition of offences and non-compliance

with orders (Bercow, 2008). It must also be remembered that any services delivered are limited activities that occur in wider settings and so the context surrounding a young person must be taken into account (Tilley, 2000). A lack of awareness about the impact of SLCN in terms of understanding spoken and written instructions by justice professionals can jeopardise a young person's chances of compliance with criminal justice processes and result in misunderstandings leading to further experiences of failure for the young person (RCSLT, 2012).

Interventions and services therefore aimed at addressing SLCN can assist in preventing and reducing re-offending rates by helping to increase oral communication skills, thus enabling the individual to access a wider range of rehabilitation programmes and subsequently empower them to change their offending behaviour (Case, 2006).

The identification of an underlying SLCN can allow for mechanisms employed to respond to specific needs and learning styles of the individual in order to successfully engage with the young person. This is essential in order that individual care plans are developed, rather than attempting to engage young people in universal mechanisms (interventions) that may not take specific needs into account (Hughes et al., 2012).

This need for services to understand and take account of the issues surrounding and impacting upon young people within the criminal justice system with SLCN was highlighted through the Bercow Review (2008). This review has been central to highlighting at a governmental level the need for speech and language professionals to work with young people in contact with the criminal justice system in order to influence reducing re-offending rates and to ensure that the young person can get the most out of their engagement with Youth Offending Services. The review highlights how speech and language skills are crucial in order for young people to cope with the education and behaviour programmes imposed on them as a result of their offending behaviour, in an attempt to reduce reoffending patterns. This notion was reinforced in 2009 when the Home Office highlighted a 'mismatch' between the literacy demands of programmes and skill levels of offenders. The RCSLT highlight how to access education and treatment programmes an offender requires GCSE level English A-C. However around one third



of offenders have speaking and listening skills below level 1 (equivalent to age eleven) of the National Framework (Davies at el, 2006) and are unable to access these programmes due to their poor language and literacy skills.” (RCSLT, 2012)

The findings of these reports and the call for more to be done to ensure young people with SLCN within the criminal justice system have access to services and interventions to address their needs is endorsed by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (Bryan & Mackenzie, 2008).

There is a developing body of evidence at present highlighting the link between poor speech, language and communication skills and offending. However, there is at present no national strategy dictating the implementation of speech and language therapy services (or similar) within Youth Offending Services. The Bercow (2008) report identified and highlighted the importance of addressing speech, language and communication needs but recommendations from the report do not cover how the links between YOS’s and the wider Criminal Justice System should be forged. A number of locally developed initiatives have started to emerge however throughout the country (see Chapter 7 for further details) but many of these lack robust evaluations to evidence the impact they are making.

#### **4.4 Conclusion and development of initial programme theory**

Although there is no evidenced causal link, risk factors for offending correlate with risk factors for SLCN’s. This may therefore account for the high prevalence of SLCN within the youth offending population, estimated to affect between 60-90% of young people who offend.

SLCN can create barriers in terms of the individual being able to fully comprehend what is happening to them, what is expected from them and how to successfully engage with the YOS. It is proposed that a certain level of speech, language and communication skill

is required by young people to be able to successfully engage with YOS's in order to maximise opportunities to bring about meaningful behaviour change through participation in all interventions set out within their engagement plan with the YOS (Bercow, 2008, Hughes et al 2012).

It could be expected therefore, that a young person engaged with the criminal justice system with a SLCN that is not appropriately addressed and provisions made for, may result in interventions being delivered by the criminal justice system not being able to reach their full potential in respect of changing and reducing subsequent offending behaviours of the young person.

The notion of using mechanisms, whereby a mechanism is defined as '*... what is it about a measure which may lead it to have a particular outcome in a given context?*' (Tilly, 1998 p145, see chapter 5 for description and discussion) to aid this description is to move beyond the merely descriptive, to explanations of why things are as they are and to look deeper in order to understand meanings behind the behaviours. Using a complexity informed critical realist perspective (discussed in Chapter five), a framework can be applied to understand the importance, impact and relationship between the context (conditions needed) mechanism and outcome within these situations, i.e. "*what are the mechanisms for change triggered by a programme [involvement with the criminal justice system] and how do they counteract the existing social processes?*" (Pawson and Tilley, 1997, p.75).

The forthcoming chapters build on the concept of using mechanisms to aid descriptive explanatory processes in order to focus the research and provide explanation. The following broad initial programme theory has been developed based on the information presented in this chapter and will be used to frame the research under the guidance of the two overarching research questions.

Overarching research question:

1. *What does a YOS SLCN model look like – What does an effective YOS service delivery model with SLCN provision look like?*

2. *What difference does it make – Can the development of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting impact positively on engagement with young people in the service?*

Initial programme theory:

*If provisions are put in place (mechanism I) in the context of the YOS (context) to address SLCN through adapted provision (mechanism II) then young people with SLCN will be able to engage more effectively (mechanism III) with the YOS, and therefore receive greater benefit in participating in the interventions designed for them by the YOS (outcome)*

## **5. Development of the Theoretical Framework**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter sets out the theoretical framework for the thesis, detailing the concepts, terms, definitions, models and theories which constitute the framework used to structure the research.

The research is based on a complexity informed realist epistemological perspective. This perspective combines Complex and Realist paradigms through the notion of 'complex causality' (Gerrits & Verweij, 2013). Complex causality describes the interaction of generative mechanisms within specific contexts which result in unidirectional outcomes, thus bringing together the ideas of realism and complexity.

This chapter builds upon the previous chapter, in putting forward the argument as to why complexity and realism provide an ideal framework from which to explore the concept of the incorporation of speech, language and communication provision within a youth offending setting. The remainder of the thesis then seeks to demonstrate this point by investigating provision using this framework.

The chapter begins by providing an overview of complexity before moving onto describe how it can be applied as a conceptual framework. Realism is then discussed in the same format, an overview followed by a description of its application as a conceptual framework. The chapter then concludes with a presentation of combining complexity and realism as a single conceptual framework; complexity informed critical realism, which forms the theoretical basis for this thesis.

## 5.2 Paradigms

The two primary paradigms that underpin this thesis are Complexity and Realism. Realism is becoming the prevailing paradigm for a number of public health related studies due to its ability to look at initiatives and acknowledge the importance of the contextual environment within which interventions are being delivered, and the impact this then has on outcomes for individuals. In addition, its focus on generative mechanisms giving rise to causal regularities (described in further detail later in this chapter) lends itself well to implementation research as there is an ability to identify what exactly it is about the initiative that is working, for whom and in what context (Pawson & Tilley, 1997, Dalkin et al, 2015).

Complexity has been growing in recognition also, in both academic and non-academic papers (i.e, Horgan, 1995 cited in Eidelson, 1997, British Medical Council, 2006) as a means by which to interpret the contextual environment impacting upon the delivery of interventions and services. There are strong links between realism and complexity, often with researchers explicitly drawing on realism to theorize the study of complex social systems (e.g. Harvey & Reed, 1996, Hood, 2012). As well as simply acknowledging the context within which interventions are being delivered, it is necessary to identify 'how' the complex situational environment is impacting upon mechanisms involved, and how this then impacts on interventions being delivered.

This thesis will look at links between realism and complexity through mutual concern with the issue of causality in open systems. In addition, it will be supplemented by methodological insights taken from a realist perspective in order to provide a detailed understanding of the need for speech, language and communication provision within a YOS setting and how this can then be evaluated.

### 5.3 The complex situational environment

At its most basic level, complexity theory is *“the study of phenomena which emerge from a number of interacting objects”* (Johnson, 2010, pp. 3–4). However, there is no single theory of complexity and indeed there are numerous overlapping complexity sciences and theories (Castellani, 2018). Complexity can therefore be described as a conceptual framework, characterised by the features it demonstrates. Overall complexity theory is concerned with:

*‘...the study of the behaviour of macroscopic collections of [interacting] units that are endowed with the potential to evolve in time. Their interactions lead to coherent collective phenomena, so-called emergent properties that can be classified only at higher levels than those of individual units.’* (Coveney & Highfield, 1995 p7)

From its early origins, complexity has evolved to become more a way of thinking about the world, with the principles of this approach having transferred to the social sciences in recent decades (Horgan, 1995 cited in Eidelson, 1997).

#### **General features for complexity**

In order to understand what is ‘complex’ it is first useful to identify what is also not ‘complex’ so as to put ideas and thinking into perspective. The table below is adapted from Glouberman and Zimmerman (2002) and suggests definitions of causality and solutions in order to define and differentiate between the simple, the complicated and the complex:

Table 4: Simple, Complicated and Complex Problems

<i>Simple</i>	Simple problems have simple causes. Causality is linear and simple problems have standard solutions. These can be applied without specific expertise; technical skills are sufficient.
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<i>Complicated</i>	Complicated problems consist of sets of simple problems, but cannot be reduced to them. They are compounded by scale and coordination problems. Solving complicated problems requires expertise and collaboration between experts. Formulae and instructions to solve complicated problems can be developed and are critical to success. If experts apply the formulae correctly, outcomes can be predicted.
<i>Complex</i>	Complex problems include sets of simple and complicated problems to which they are not reducible. The interactions between determinants of the sub-problems can lead to non-linear causal relations between potential causes and outcomes. Also, context sensitivity can make a problem complex. As a consequence, outcomes are unpredictable. To solve complex problems, formulae and standardised solutions that proved effective in the past provide little guidance. Instead, complex problems are solved through fail-safe experiments that allow learning by doing or by making sense of events post facto.

Simple problems are characterised by simple linear causality, i.e. intervention x will produce outcome y. Complicated problems are multifaceted in the fact that they consist of ‘sets’ of problems, however given the right tools, outcomes from actions can be predicted. Complex problems have unpredictable outcomes, and it is this which sets them apart from simple and complicated problems.

The CDYOS as a service is made up of staff from multi-agency backgrounds (including; social work, health, police, education etc.), all working together in the best interests of the young people they come into contact with. The service itself is situated within the local authority. Governance comes both internally from the host local authority and at a national level from the Youth Justice Board (YJB). This combination of staff from different backgrounds and representing different perspectives, coupled with the split governance arrangements for the service as a whole, leads to the argument that the YOS is

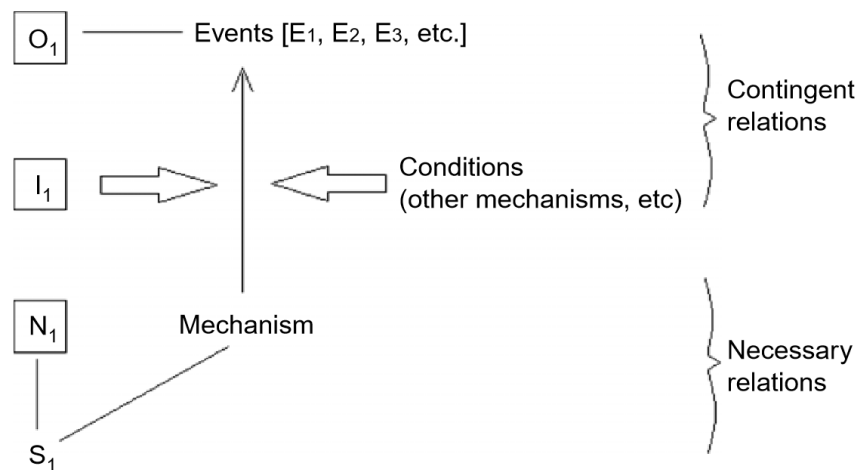
complicated, in that 'sets' of problems start to emerge stemming from the formation and governance of the service.

However, the service tips into the realm of being complex once the young people that the CDYOS work with are entered into the equation. The young people engaging with the CDYOS come from a range of backgrounds and may be involved with a number of services and organisations alongside the CDYOS at any one time. CDYOS must therefore take into account all the young people's needs and those arising from working with other services/organisations, in order to effectively work with, and engage the young person. Some of these needs and requirements may be simple, whilst others may be complicated and some complex. It is the interactions between these sets of 'problems' which make both the delivery of the service and the interactions with the young people complex. All young people working with the CDYOS are individual and so too are their 'problems' and so a 'one size fits all' approach cannot be used and each young person must be individually assessed in order to understand the complex situation surrounding them and to identify how CDYOS can effectively engage with them.

Complexity as a theory came to light in the 1600's, breaking away from the idea that everything can be described in terms of mechanical organizations, leaning instead towards the belief that the universe is a grand 'clockwork' and everything can be understood by breaking it down (Davis & Sumara 2006). However, it really started to gain prominence during the industrial revolution of the early nineteenth century as the time produced a growing need to develop scientific understanding of the mechanical effects of heat to power machinery (thermodynamics). This new science included the study of macroscopic features (such as volume, pressure, and temperature) rather than the mechanical interactions of individual atoms (through their velocity, force, and mass) and therefore looked at whole systems rather than individual components in order to draw explanations (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984). Figure 5 illustrates the notion of a whole systems approach which accepts that internal relationships of structure will be subject to contingent external relationships with other phenomena, which will in turn have their own causal tendencies (Danermark, 2002; Sayer, 2010, cited in Hood 2012). Any given need, however disaggregated can be said to be complex in its own right (Hood, 2012).



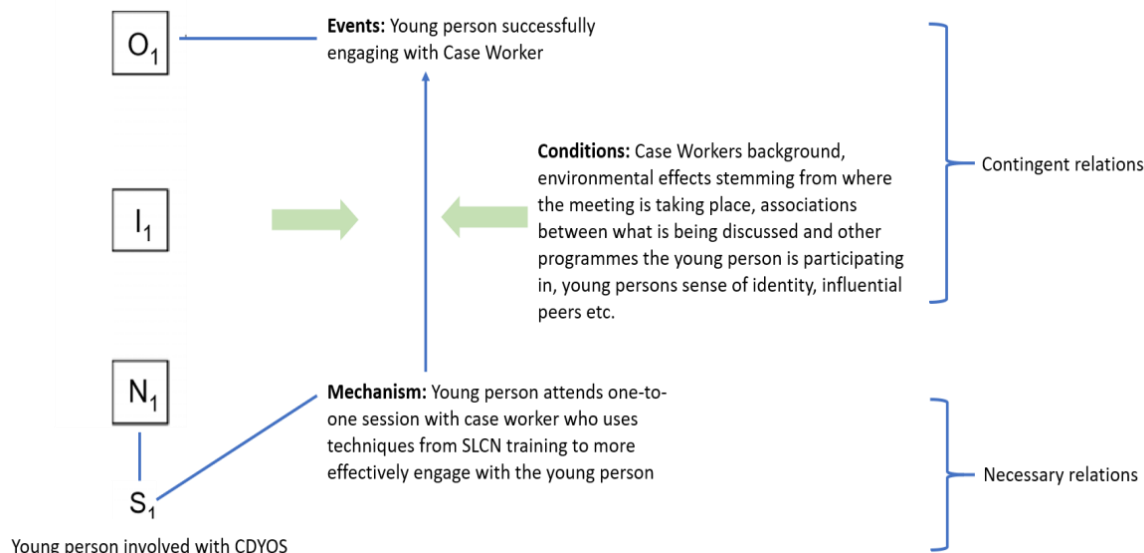
Figure 5: Complex causality; necessary and contingent relations



(adapted from Sayer, 2000, cited in Hood, 2012)

The internal relationships within the CDYOS and the young people they work with will be affected and impacted upon by contingent relationships that either the young person or the CDYOS has with other organisations/services involved with the young person. In addition, personal connections of the young person may too influence events. For example, case workers backgrounds alongside environmental affects and associations with other ongoing events in the young person's life will combine to make up the contingent relations, see figure 6.

Figure 6: Complex causality shown in CDYOS



(Adapted from Hood, 2012)

Historically complexity theory, in addition to thermodynamics, has been linked to two other scientific fields; cybernetics and chaos theory. These linkages are important in the development of complexity theory as they address ways of viewing, describing and defining complex systems which are otherwise absent from a purely non-linear thermodynamic account (Williams, 2015). Cybernetics draws on the linkages between contemporary mathematics, early computer science, and thermodynamics. It focuses on describing and modelling the behaviour of systems through understanding information, feedback, control, and communication (Mirowski, 2008). Cybernetics is not only confined to artificial and technological systems, it is also used within the natural, social, and neural worlds (Wiener, 1948). Chaos theory focuses on iteration and recursion as a means of destabilizing systems (Hayles, 1989). It is concerned with elements that are impossible to predict or control, the weather for example.

The development of complexity theory based on thermodynamics, cybernetics and chaos theory is summarised by Williams (2015). It is essentially suggested to be the

theoretical field which encompasses all previous theories which seek to identify and examine the whole system, breaking it down into 'systematic properties';

*'Thermodynamics, cybernetics, and chaos theory engender a new scientific language, one which confronts the still powerful popular view of science as micro-reductive discipline par excellence, and opens the door to the suite of approaches and phenomena under the rubric of complexity. Complexity as a scientific field is in a certain sense the latest name for a group of interlinked disciplinary practices which examine systemic properties.'* (p15)

Whilst there is still variance of opinion in relation to a single definition as to what constitutes a complex system, there are a number of generally agreed principles (Ladyman et al., 2013; Mitchell, 2009). Complexity as a theoretical paradigm goes beyond systems thinking, recognising not only that the component parts of open systems are interrelated and interconnected, but also acknowledging that the interconnections are inherently unpredictable and prone to change (Wolf-Branigin, 2009; Stevens & Cox, 2008). This structural condition produces a requirement for 'dynamic relationships' whereby feedback between component parts can generate non-linear behaviour (Williams, 2015). This notion of dynamic relationships sets complexity apart from other theories as it allows for the exploration of component parts of a system whilst taking into account their unstable nature and exploring the effects these may have on outcomes. This approach is important when looking at the CDYOS due to the number of competing variables influencing behaviours, both systematic and at individual level at any one time. Indeed, complexity theory has been used across a broad range of social science areas as well as in the natural sciences, including studies of health, family research, psychology, business management, economics and politics (Davis & Sumara, 2009). The thinking aligned with complexity theory produces a useful framework when addressing human behaviour as it recognises and takes account of the fact that behaviour is unpredictable, that people can and will change their rules of interaction and expected outcomes often in relation to the context within which they are operating.

In terms of understanding systems, complexity thinking rejects linear cause-and-effect thinking and instead uses the concepts of emergence, connectivity, interdependence and feedback (Byrne, 1997). Causality does not run in any one direction; parts have

causal implications for the whole, interactions among parts have causal implications for the whole, parts have causal implications for each other, and the whole has causal implications for parts (Byrne & Callaghan, 2013).

Emergence recognises that it is not possible to understand things simply in terms of their components, but that understanding can only come from viewing things in their totality (Byrne & Callaghan, 2013). Byrne and Callaghan (2013) suggests there are few better definitions of the implications of emergence than the earliest use of the word in this context:

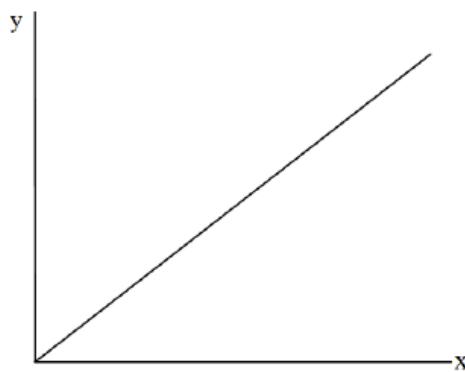
*“Every resultant is either a sum or a difference of the co-operant forces; their sum when their directions are the same – their difference when the directions are contrary. Further, every resultant is clearly traceable in its components, because these are homogeneous and commensurable. It is otherwise with emergent, when, instead of adding measurable motion to measurable motion, or things of one kind to other individuals of their kind, there is a co-operation of things of unlike kinds. The emergent is unlike its components insofar as these are incommensurable and it cannot be reduced to their sum or their differences”.* (G.H. Lewes, 1875: 412 cited in Byrne & Callaghan, 2013 p218)

Another important concept of complexity is that of feedback. Feedback is a form of circular causality, where an effect is fed back into its own cause (Heylighen & Joslyn, 2001). Complex systems use feedback to enable the system to move from one state to another. Feedback can be either negative, which will dampen down processes, or positive, whereby processes are reinforced (Williams, 2015). Feedback acts by generating non-linear interactions between component parts and is therefore one of the primary drivers by which systems are able to self-organise, and thus increase in complexity (Williams, 2015).

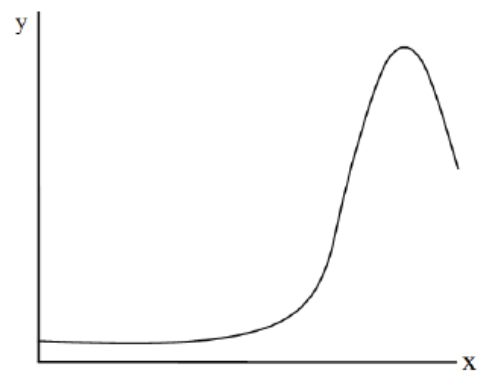
Feedback loops are an important element of complexity as they serve to reinforce or discourage particular behaviours and actions, for example; a Case Worker, following engagement with the SALT in developing speech, language and communication friendly strategies to assist with the engagement of young people may experience favourable results whilst employing new strategies learnt when engaging with a young person. This

would create a positive feedback loop which will then affect future practices when engaging with the same young person or other young people exhibiting similar traits. Feedback also acts as the key process through which emergence happens. This is achieved via the establishment of circular causality between the component parts of a system and the emergent effects, fed back into the constituent elements through downwards causation (Williams, 2015). These feedback loops can also be the way in which small changes to the initial conditions of a system can result in large differences in the end result. For example, in a linear system, change will be additive and directly proportionate (Figure 7). In non-linear systems, changes are multiplicative, and hence outputs may be massively disproportionate to their inputs, (Gleick, 1987).

Figure 7: Linear and non-linear relation between x and y



**Fig. a. Linear relation between x and y.**



**Fig. b. Non-linear relation between x and y.**

The non-linearity of systems is an important concept when looking at generated outcomes;

*“Non-linear systems are able to interact to create behaviours which are more than the mere sum of their parts, where very small changes in the initial conditions of the system can result in greatly different end results, underpinning the properties of emergence, feedback, the creation of far-from-equilibrium states, and ultimately the ability of complex systems to undergo processes of self-organisation”* (Williams, 2015)

The CDYOS is a prime example of a non-linear system. The service is influenced on a number of levels; the micro, through individual behaviours of staff and young people engaged with the service, the meso, by the decisions and actions of the Strategic Management within the CDYOS, and the macro through the political, economic, and social landscape within which it is operating. Seemingly small changes at any of these levels can cause a 'ripple/butterfly effect' impacting upon delivery and practice at a number of levels. For example, the decision to introduce a SALT into the staff team was made at the meso level by Strategic Managers. This addition has fundamentally changed working practices within the team through the introduction of staff training on speech, language and communication needs of young people. The training has resulted in staff changing working practices and approaches to communicating with young people in an attempt to ensure full engagement. Feedback at the micro, i.e. individual Case Worker, level has helped shape engagement with young people and this in turn has impacted upon and adapted methods employed to engage with young people. Effects of this change to working practices are also seen at the meso level where numbers of referrals for SALT assessments are increasing (assumed to be as a result of staff becoming more aware of what constitutes a SLCN) and also through external interest in the work being undertaken with other YOS's commissioning similar training. The CDYOS, as a result of the addition of a SALT into the team, has self-organised, changing core values and adapting working practices to ensure they are able to more effectively engage with the young people they have come into contact with. These changes and adaptations have been the result of positive reengagement experienced through feedback loops.

Complexity as a theoretical approach has commanded greater prominence over recent years in national publications outside of academia, for example, the British Medical Council published guidance relating to complex interventions in 2006, *'Developing and Evaluating Complex Interventions: New Guidance'* (2006) to aid practitioners in understanding complexity and how it relates to the interventions being provided within a healthcare setting. In addition, the World Health Organisation (WHO) have also published a working paper on systems thinking and complexity in the frame of health system strengthening (de Savigny & Taghreed, 2009). Reference is also made to complexity in terminology used within YOS's, with the term 'complex needs' used

frequently. It could be suggested that some of these publications blur the lines between complicated and complex, i.e. complex needs within YOS often relates to the compound effects of a young person's needs across multiple domains (i.e. high risk to self and/ or others, physical or mental health needs, learning disabilities, communication needs and substance misuse) however no definitions between simple/complicated/complex in terms of the impact of these needs are provided. Within the realm of service delivery, the distinction between complicated and complex in terms of a label of needs young people are experiencing can be suggested to bare little significance as it is more used as a way of expressing that there are multiple influences upon a young person which are affecting and contributing towards behaviours exhibited. It is this acknowledgement of multiple influences within the 'system' of the young person's behaviour which is important to acknowledge as it is only then that the interconnectivity between them can be explored.

#### **5.4 Application of complexity as a conceptual framework**

Within this thesis complexity will be used as a conceptual framework, to describe the process of change in open systems. In particular it will be utilised to explore how unexpected consequences, or outcomes can emerge from critical state of transitions, rather than conforming to stable, predictable patterns of cause and effect (Thelen & Smith, 1994, cited in Hood, 2012).

Whilst complex interventions are often considered to be those with multiple objectives, strategies and components, implemented across multiple sites by multiple actors, the use of complexity in this thesis refers to understanding the social systems within which interventions are implemented as complex (Shiell, Hawe, & Gold, 2008). Referred to by Byrne (2011) as a '*complexity theory frame of reference*' (p. 12). The complexity frame of reference is therefore concerned with the CDYOS as a 'social system' with its internal (i.e. staff, structures, cultural values) and external (i.e. political environment, national directive) influences.

Utilising Complexity Theory within the field of health is not new. The steer to towards seeing the world through a complexity lens and using complexity concepts has been particularly evident within the field of health from the early 2000's (Kannampallil et al, 2011; Marchal et al, 2014; Plsek, 2001, Plsek & Greenhalgh, 2001). Within healthcare there are often a number of systems and system components interacting within differing dynamic environments (Kannampallil et al, 2011) which lends itself to be understood from a complexity perspective. In addition, CDYOS as an organisation is located within the Local Authority (Durham County Council). Local Authorities are often described as complex organisations with no two alike due to the variability in the range of discretionary services they have chosen to provide, how services are delivered and how they are structured (Worrall et al., 1998). In addition, at the macro level, local authorities exist within highly turbulent environments with constant new legalisations being introduced, reorganisations, market testing and rapid changes to local, national political, social, economic and demographic circumstances to which they must respond (Worrall et al., 1998) (see chapter 3 for a more detailed explanation of the external impacts of the YOS). These elements surrounding the CDYOS continually interact and re-organise themselves into more elaborate structures over time resulting in an 'emergent dominant forces' which are distinct from older competing paradigms (Matthews et al, 1999) and thus creating a complex frame of reference.

## **5.5 Realist approach**

As an approach, Realism has been gaining interest within the research community over the past decade as an alternative to positivist and interpretive research (Bygstad et al, 2011). Its philosophical foundations were laid by Roy Bhaskar in the 1970s (Bhaskar, 1998), who put forward the idea of a reality which exists outside of our perception. Objects and structures are considered to be 'real', they have real effects, however it is acknowledged that they are concept dependent (Westhope, 2008). These concepts and meanings are argued to be socially negotiated, therefore implying that objects, structures, and the meanings associated with them, are culturally and historically



context-dependent (Sayer, 1992; Archer, 1995 cited in Westhope, 2008). Although a real world exists, knowledge of it is socially constructed.

Similar to Complexity Theory, Realism is not a 'single movement', instead it involves a variety of perspectives and developments (Archer et al, 1998). The core principle of realist enquiry is the notion that observational evidence cannot alone establish causal uniformities, instead it is required that explanations as to 'why' the relationships came about and identify what is happening within the system (in the form of mechanisms) to connect inputs and outputs (Dalkin, 2015). Realism provides a conceptual alternative therefore to positivism and postmodernism (Archer et al., 1998; Reed & Harvey, 1992 cited in Cochran-Smith et al 2014). Mechanisms in this respect can be simply defined as '*a causal structure that explains a phenomenon*' (Bhaskar, 1998 cited in Bygstad et al 2011 p1).

### ***General features of Realism***

Realism operates from the perspective of an ontological theory, coupled with '*epistemological relativism*' and '*judgmental rationality*' (Archer et al, 1998). It rejects 'naïve realism', i.e. the view that perceptions of reality directly represent objective nature and also radical postmodernist perspectives, i.e. the view that reality does not exist apart from our perceptions and constructs of it (Cochran-Smith et al 2014). Instead it argues for the appreciation of three dimensions of reality; the empirical, which includes experienced events; the actual, comprising of all events, irrespective of whether experienced or not; and most importantly, the causal, consisting of generative mechanisms (Houston, 2010). With this approach, realism appreciates that there is more to view than that which is directly observable;

*"...realism promotes the consideration of underlying social relations and causal mechanisms generating social practices, ideological constructs and perceived phenomenon"* (Lawson, 2006 p17)

This notion of a stratified reality includes both observable and hidden 'layers'. Cochran-Smith et al (2014, p109), provide a useful description of the influence of such layers;

*"People's observable behaviour is underpinned by other layers such as tacit belief systems, patterns of social interaction and organizational structures, and deep and contingent causal mechanisms, which are not immediately perceptible but which do lead to patterns that we can see."*

When applying this approach therefore to a context such as the CDYOS, it can be seen that the behaviours exhibited by staff and young people within interactions will be influenced not only by the current context which they are in, but further 'layers' which will both influence and define behavioural patterns. Understanding these causal mechanisms is therefore at the centre of realism, i.e. the promotion of the conceptualisation of complex phenomena in order to facilitate research for feasible causal mechanisms. Realism states that social and natural life are complex, structured and open, therefore there is a requirement to sort out the contingent from the necessary relations influencing phenomena in order to progress and understand this causal explanation (Lawson,2006). The goal of the realist approach, as stated by Bhaskar (1986), is therefore for the social sciences to create an explanatory social critique. Using critical realism in this research will therefore allow for a critique of the effect of the introduction of speech, language and communication provision within a youth offending setting.

An important concept within realism is that of agency. Agency, relates to the power of people as actors within the social world, whereas structure denotes the power exerted from social conditions on people (Bryman, 2004). The emergence of agency and structure and the way that they combine to produce new properties is a core concept (Bhaskar 1998c; Carter & New 2004; Danermark, 2002).

As systems are developed, they establish properties and powers on their own, which are different from the properties and powers of their constituents, referred to as 'emergent properties'. These emergent properties are characterised by their liability to transform the understanding of context, place and time and enforce a new understanding;

*“Emergence refers to the way in which particular combinations of things, processes and practices in social life frequently give rise to new emergent properties. The defining characteristic of emergent properties is their irreducibility. They are more than the sum of their constituents, since they are a product of their combination, and as such are able to modify the world” (Carter & New 2004: 7)*

This search for causal mechanisms is often linked to work by Merton (1967), who identified the need for middle range theory, focusing on identification of social mechanisms. At a general level, mechanisms can be viewed as ‘*a causal structure that can trigger events*’ (Bhaskar, 1998 cited in Bygstad et al 2011 p4), however, the understanding of mechanisms is arguably more challenging. Mechanisms, within this perspective are deemed to be contextual, therefore each time a mechanism is triggered the contextual situation will play a part on the outcome, i.e. different outcomes are produced, dependent on what context the mechanism is triggered. Mechanisms are therefore useful tools to explain rather than predict phenomenon (Smith, 2010). Because of the contextual nature of mechanisms, they are often described within a context-mechanism-outcome pattern (Pawson & Tilly, 1997).

This theory of causation, the production of particular mechanisms in particular contexts, is referred to as ‘generative causation’ and it focuses on the explanation of situations rather than the pursuit of prediction of universal laws. Pawson and Tilley (1997) describe this understanding through an example of the lighting of gunpowder, the relation between igniting gunpowder (one event) and the explosion (the other event) is caused by the chemical reaction of gunpowder (the underlying mechanism). This example illustrates how in order to understand the outcome, the context and mechanism which generate this outcome, must also be considered. This understanding is often communicated by ‘Context, Mechanism, Outcome’ configurations, also widely referred to as CMO’s.

A realist assertion of CMO principles places context centrally within the understanding of speech, language and communication provision within youth offending settings. It seeks to understand the ways by which behaviour may be shaped under particular conditions. Thus, it has the potential to offer explanation and understanding as to why particular provisions/interventions have the impact they do within particular contexts. This approach allows the ‘drilling down’ from overarching causal propositions to more

specific, manageable and plausible considerations which can be addressed within the service setting producing a theory as to why certain outcomes are evident in certain conditions/contexts (Carter & New, 2004; Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

## **5.6 Application of realism as a conceptual framework**

Realism aids the collection of observations from the social world, but also assists in explaining these observations within a framework that takes account of the underlying mechanisms and contextual conditions which inform actions (Dalkin, 2015). Context can be argued to be particularly important when looking at the application of speech, language and communication provision within youth offending setting as what is essentially a health derived provision is being delivered in a very different context to the norm (criminal justice rather than health setting). Adaptations have needed to be made to how provision is both communicated and delivered, for example, an outreach model of engagement with a Speech and Language Therapist has been adopted within the CDYOS using the same methodology as the YOS workers, rather than the less proactive method of engagement (that of sending out a letter and waiting for the applicant to accept a predefined appointment time) seen within NHS health settings.

Using a realist approach allows for the linking of both natural and social science methods in exploring synergies between health practices within a youth criminal justice setting. It allows for a discourse between these elements in order to identify connections between observed reality and the generative mechanisms of social phenomenon, and how they may be understood. It allows for the examination of the interplay, reproduction, change or the emergence of new properties and powers over time and the potential for influencing structural change (Williams, 1999). Critical realism provides for reductive (abductive) reasoning in order to explain why events occur which allows for the consideration of another perspective when considering generative mechanisms.

## 5.7 Laying the foundations: A Complexity informed Realist framework

Realism has much in common with Complexity Theory as discussed in the sections above. For example, the focus on contingency, how particular configurations of context trigger certain mechanisms and how these contexts shift in time and place (Gerrits & Verweij, 2013). Therefore, it is of no surprise that a number of researchers have taken the approach of combining both. Gerrits & Verweij (2013, based on the work of Byrne, 2011) combine complexity and realism through the establishment of the term '*complex causality*' in describing the interaction of generative mechanisms within specific contexts, resulting in unidirectional outcomes and thus bringing together the ideas of realism and complexity. They state that;

*"...a space of possible combinations exists, from which a specific configuration is triggered at a given point in time. Thus, causality is both real and complex, and, importantly, its contingency also applies to those studying it, implying that causality is, by definition, interpreted."* (Gerrits & Verweij, 2013 p)

Cochran-Smith et al. (2014) also discuss the favourable proposition of combining complexity and critical realism as an appropriate platform from which to base research;

*"we suggest that as a research platform, CT-CR [complexity theory – critical realism] has the capacity to open up new questions, point to new places to look for explanations, and offer new ways of understanding the initial conditions, system interactions, and underlying causal mechanisms"* (2014, p106)

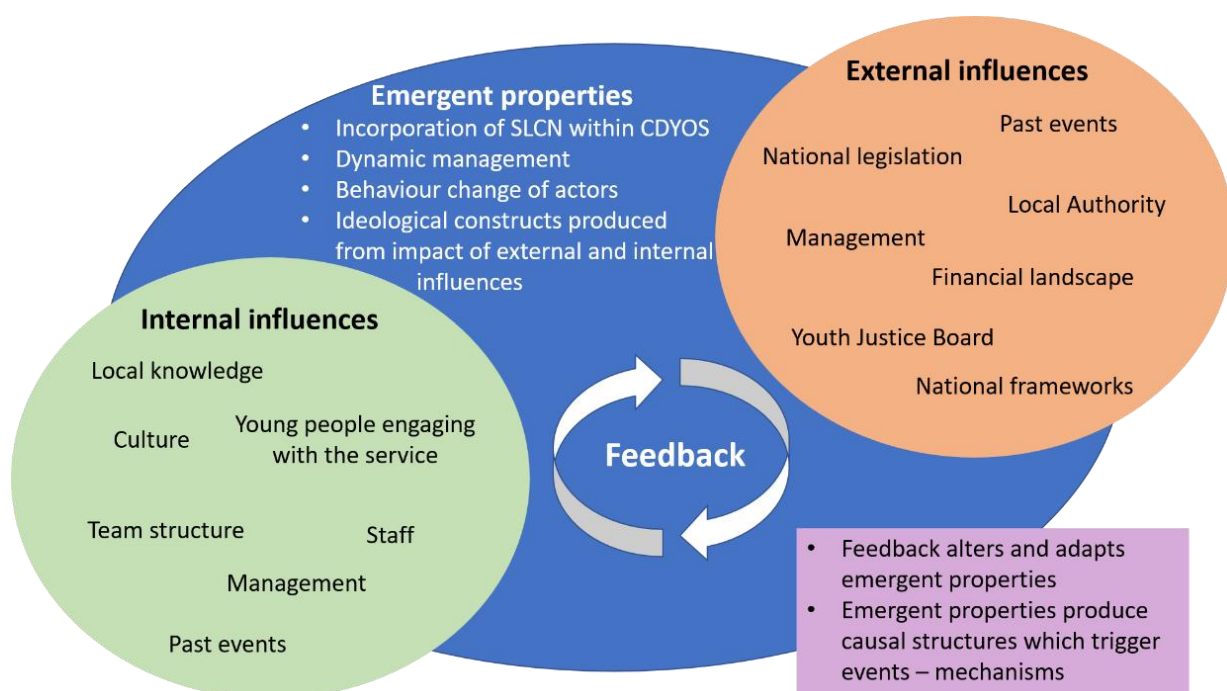
Byrne (1998) and Reed and Harvey (1992) have gone so far as to suggest that by synthesizing these theories one of the central problems of sociological theory can be addressed; it produces a method by which to relate the macro and micro issues without being reductionist and also provides a framework from which to describe the agency-structure relationship acknowledging the 'human effect', whereby human agency greatly increases the complexity of interactions and the difficulty of producing causal explanations people can have through their initiation of certain causal sequences (Cochran-Smith et al, 2014).

Through combining complexity and realism within a single framework, identification of the meanings behind causal mechanisms between both actors and structures can be interrogated. This allows therefore for both complex and contingent causality to be explored, allowing for both beliefs and larger contexts/structures to be included within the analysis (Cochran-Smith et al., 2014).

Based on the work of Cochran-Smith et al (2014), in order to integrate complexity and realism, YOS's can be conceptualised in terms of multiple overlapping complex systems, including: individual staff members, staff groupings, police, young people involved with the YOS as complex systems; the physical base of the YOS and outreach locations used as complex systems; the court rooms, the community centres and offices used to meet with young people as complex systems; the education interventions delivered, the health interventions delivered as complex systems with open ambiguous borders with other complex systems open or embedded within them; the complex systems of larger professional and policy environments, including the local authority; and multiple, intersecting and non-hierarchical social systems of inequalities based on race, culture, language, class and gender. Using this conceptualisation, it is evident that any initiatives within this environment cannot be understood in terms of process-product or knowledge-transmission logic (Cochran-Smith et al, 2014).

Figure 8 is an illustrative representation of the CDYOS through a combined Complex and Realist theory perspective. The CDYOS can be viewed as an open system within which there are a number of other systems operating with both internal and external influences. These systems through feedback loops alter and adapt the emergent properties exhibited by the system as a result of the dynamic relationship between structure and agent within the system. The internal and external influences create specific contexts which in turn impact and influence the behaviours exhibited by actors and thus creating causal mechanisms within the emerging properties seen creating specific outcomes.

Figure 8: Combining complexity and realism when looking at CDYOS



As a framework for investigating the incorporation of SLCN within a YOS setting, combining realism and complexity acknowledges a focus on initial conditions, contexts and circumstances within the open systems of the CDYOS. These systems are widely variable and unpredictable; however, they are not random and therefore require complex notions of causality linked to understandings of the local systems and how these relate to the meso and macro systems within which they operate in order to be understood (Cochran-Smith et al, 2014). As Cochran-Smith et al (2014) surmises:

*“...realism conceptualizes individuals’ reasons and meanings as part of the real world, this means that beliefs, perceptions, and interpretations can be studied as underlying causal mechanisms in interaction and conjunction with other causes.”*  
(p112)

## 5.8 Conclusion

The decision to combine Complexity with Realism has been taken to address the key requirements of the research topic, the introduction of SLCN initiatives within a YOS setting and the interesting questions it poses in relation to how it is delivered, how it is received and what effects it has. SLCN initiatives lead by a SLT will be by their nature a health initiative and is tied up in health-related policy, leadership, direction and delivery. This context in itself is complex. However, when coupled with the fact that this health initiative is to be delivered within a criminal justice setting based within a local authority it compounds the complexity of the situation. These complex systems and multiple interacting parts cannot be separated from one another without losing key aspects of how the system works. Therefore, in order to be able to understand the effects the interventions are having it is necessary to acknowledge and factor into analysis how context plays a large role in influencing delivery and results. In addition the combination of complexity and realism allows for the development of complex and contingent causal explanations which take account of actors beliefs as well as the processes and contexts within which they are located, therefore accounting for agency and responsibility of actors within CDYOS in initiating causal sequences culminating in changing behaviour patterns with young people (adapted from Cochran-Smith et al., 2014)

This research is concerned with the generation of knowledge regarding what works for whom and under what circumstances in relation to the provision of SLCN initiatives within a YOS setting, therefore combining complexity and realism provides an overarching paradigm in which to look at the initiatives being delivered with a focus on the complex nature of the environment and the importance of mechanisms and context leading to outcomes delivered. It provides a framework for analysis of the SLCN provision in terms of the complex intersecting systems within which it is delivered.

Chapter 6 builds upon the discussions within this chapter in presenting the methodological approaches to the research drawing on a complexity informed realist perspective.



## **6. Exploration of the Methodological approach**

### **6.1 Introduction**

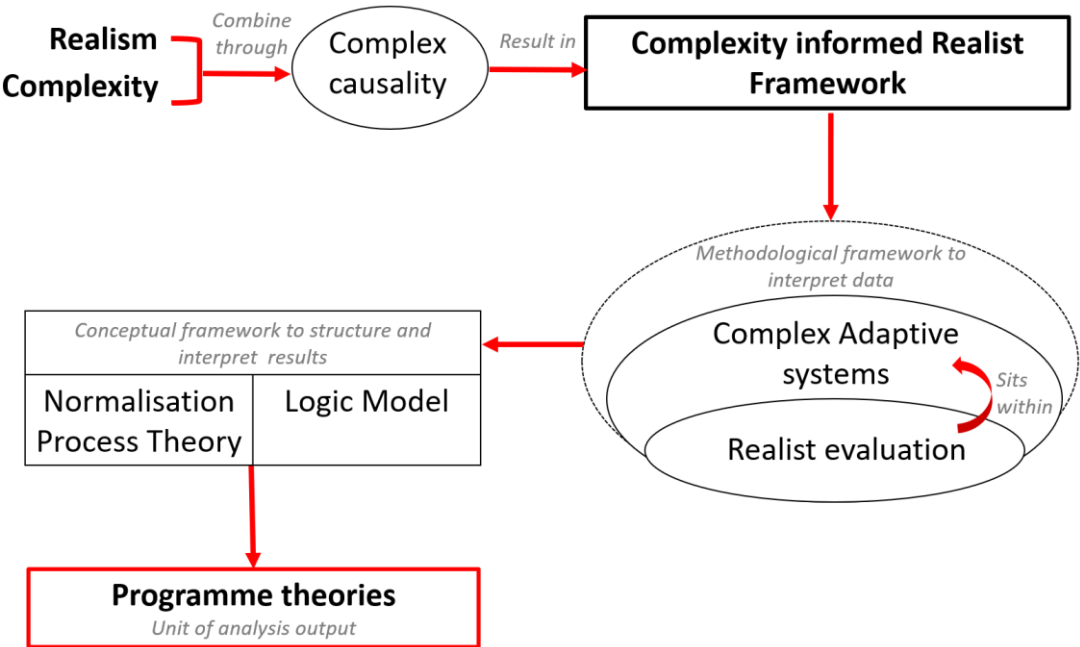
This chapter builds on the information presented in the previous chapter exploring the combined Complexity/Realism approach; Complexity informed Realist framework. This is undertaken by identifying the methodological concepts and frameworks which will guide the data collection and analysis detailed in chapter's seven and ten. Methodology in this sense relates to the combination of methods and how the data generated is interpreted (Olsen & Morgan, 2005).

This research seeks to identify the key generative mechanisms (unobservable and emergent causal powers which result from interplay between structural proprieties and properties of agency) required to enable the CDYOS to successfully incorporate SLCN provision within a YOS context. In order to address this, it is useful to base the method of enquiry in evaluation so that provision provided can be assessed along with the impacts which may be attributed to it. Evaluation takes a social problem and then seeks to determine how successful (or otherwise) efforts (or interventions) have been to address it (Taylor, 2013). The problem with evaluation however, is one of complexity. YOS's are part of a local authority structure, which is made up of a number of complex social interventions acting upon complex social systems (for example league tables, performance measures, regulations etc.) and therefore, any interventions/programmes delivered within the YOS will be constrained, and their effects dependent on the context within which they are implemented (Pawson et al. 2005). This complexity is exhibited on a number of levels, at the micro level of the person, the meso level of locale and networks, and macro level of the broader political, social and economic environment. In order to address this, a Realist Evaluation approach within a Complex Adaptative Systems framework is used to inform the data collection methods.

In addressing the research questions, a mixed methods approach is used within the research to inform data collection (discussed in chapters seven and ten). The data

generated through the methods is in response to the key research questions. Therefore, findings are structured within conceptual frameworks including Normalisation Process Theory, in order to understand work that people do individually and collectively to perform acts such as SLCN related provision and how such acts can become ‘normalised within a service delivery setting; and logic models, an approach which provides a visual summary as to how an intervention, such as incorporating SLCN related provision within a service for example, works. These frameworks are employed within the confines of the notion of complex adaptive systems and realist evaluation. This is so that the discussion and analysis of the data is framed in such a way, that allows for the emerging themes coming out of the findings to be re-framed in respect of key generative mechanisms which can contribute towards identification of what does an effective YOS SLCN related provision look like (question 1); and can it impact positively on the engagement of young people? (question two). Figure 9 below, provides a visual illustration of the frameworks used to structure this research.

*Figure 9: Illustrative overview of theoretical structures*



This chapter provides an overview of realist research, highlighting a realist evaluation approach, followed by a summary of complex adaptive systems and how these relate to, and frame the collection and interpretation of data within the research. Normalisation Process Theory and logic models are then presented as ways in which to assist with the interpretation and presentation of findings. The chapter then concludes with an overview of programme theories and the role they have within the research. Chapters seven and ten build on the work presented in this chapter by detailing the methods employed within the frameworks identified here, to answer the two research questions.

## **6.2 Realist Research**

Realist research is a theory driven approach which uses the notion of generative mechanisms to give rise to causal regularities. It seeks to understand not only whether an intervention works, but what it is about it that works, for whom, in what circumstances and why (Pawson & Manzano-Santaella, 2012). The foundation of realist research is that the research process starts with theorising (Manzano, 2016). It is then the refinement of these theories through data analysis that leads to the concluding findings of an evaluation (Pawson and Tilley 1997). These theories state how the intervention (or programme) leads to certain outcomes, and in which conditions.

Theory-driven approaches to evaluation started to come to light during the 1980s. They have been described to focus not only on the implementation of the intervention and its effectiveness, but also on the causal mechanisms and the contextual factors that underlie change (Marchal et al, 2012). The use of a realist approach will therefore assist in framing the multiple resources delivered as part of the SLCN provision. Applying the principles of realist approach allows for an understanding of why, and what elements of SLCN provision are successful, or unsuccessful, by exposing the underlying mechanisms through which different components of the provision lead to the outcomes achieved. Realist approaches attend to the ways that interventions may have different effects for different people, or depending on the contexts into which they are introduced (Westhorp et al., 2011). The formulae  $\text{Context} + \text{Mechanism} = \text{Outcome}$  (C+M=O) is

used to express this. CMO configurations are used as explanatory formulae (otherwise referred to as realist programme theories), which are refined as the research progresses and then 'tested' through empirical data.

Programme theories aid explanations of social events by assisting with the identification of causal mechanisms which lie behind social events, activities, or phenomena. This engagement with explanation and causal analysis makes realism a useful tool for analysing social problems such as SLCN related provision within a YOS context, and suggesting solutions for social change (Fletcher et al., 2016). Theories produced through this type of analysis are not abstract high-level concepts regarding universal laws, but instead, more specific, practical theories leading to an understanding as to why a certain outcome(s) was generated.

In the case of this research the main questions guiding the research are:

1. *What does a YOS SLCN model look like – What does an effective YOS service delivery model with SLCN provision look like?*
2. *What difference does it make – Can the development of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting impact positively on engagement with young people in the service?*

These questions seek to identify 'what' SLCN provision should look like, and secondly 'how' it makes a difference. Because realism searches for generative causation, it adopts a 'retroduction', i.e. '*reasoning about why things happen including why the data appear the way they do*' (Olsen, 2007 p1), approach to research. That is, inference is taken from a description of a phenomenon to a description of something that produces it, or is a condition for it (Huston, 2010). Retroduction involves moving from the level of observations and lived experience to postulating about the underlying structures and mechanisms that account for the phenomena involved (Mingers, 2003 cited in McEvoy, 2006). This position is summarised in a statement made by Bhaskar (1978):

*Merely knowing that event 'C' had been followed by event 'D' was insufficient (and unnecessary)... What was important was gaining an understanding of how 'C' gave rise to 'D'.*

Peirce (1958) described this approach as *'thinking backward'* from the effect to the cause where events are studied in order to understand to what may have, must have, or could have caused them. In reference to the incorporation of SLCN related provision within the YOS setting, this approach will address 'how' having such provision in the service impacts on outcomes such as service delivery methods and engagement levels with young people.

Retroduction as an approach incorporates a number of steps. These steps are in place to take the research from the initial question, based on a reading of the situation within the 'actual' level of reality framed in a way that seeks to explore meaning, i.e. *'what must be the case in order for events to occur as they do?'* or *'What has to be in place to make this response happen?'* (Huston, 2010). In asking these 'types' of questions deep level structures need to be explored in order to unearth mechanisms operating below the surface of the empirical recognition (Huston, 2010). Indeed, retroduction as an approach allows for the movement between knowledge of empirical level phenomena, expressed through the creation of explanations in ways that hold *'ontological depth'* and can potentially therefore give some indications on the existence of unobservable entities (Downward and Mearman 2006, cited in Zachariadis et al 2013). This approach will assist the movement from looking simply at the incorporation of SLCN provision as working or not working, to identifying why it makes a difference. In the realist frame of reference, it will assist understanding of *'What within the incorporation of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting has worked, for whom and in which circumstances?'* (Pawson & Tilley, 1997, p?). It will do this by exposing the key contextual conditions and underlying mechanisms through which different components of the SLCN related provision lead to the outcomes achieved within the service.

In adopting a retroduction approach, initial assumptions are kept weak and field methods are used to improve knowledge of the object of research (Olsen, 2007). These initial assumptions are formulated at the start of the research process and consist of 'initial

programme theories'. Bhaskar (1979) condoned the use of existing theory as a starting point for empirical research in order to '*avoid any commitment to the content of specific theories and recognize the conditional nature of all its results*' (p. 6). Therefore, these initial theories must be treated as just that: initial theories in order that these theories are able to facilitate a deeper analysis to support, elaborate, or deny the theory in assisting to build a new and more accurate explanation of reality (Fletcher et al., 2016). These initial theories are generally based on explorations into the topic of the research. In the case of this research, initial theory gleaned from consultations with key stakeholders within the CDYOS were used alongside the information presented within the background sections to this thesis in generating the initial programme theories used to guide this research (see chapters seven and ten for detailed commentary on methods).

### ***Realist evaluation***

Realist evaluation is the core approach taken within the umbrella of realist research. It follows the premise of the realist approach as detailed in above and in the previous chapter.

Interventions such as SLCN provision operate through the introduction of new ideas and/or resources into existing social relationships and thus create mechanisms for change by modifying capacities, resources, constraints and choices for young people and YOS workers (Judge, 2000). Realist evaluation attends to the ways in which these interventions may have different effects for different people. This is done by trying to understand the configurations of contexts, mechanisms and outcomes in play. This section provides detail specific to the realist evaluation methodology which is used to inform this research.

Realist evaluation belongs to the school of theory-driven inquiry and seeks to answer why, how and under what circumstances an intervention would deliver (or not deliver) the desired outcomes (Pawson & Tilly, 1997). It is not an evaluation technique as such,

but a framework for the whole enterprise (Pawson, 2002). It is therefore not about method but more an ontology.

Realist evaluation as an approach grew in popularity in the late 90's through the work of Pawson and Tilly who argued that traditional evaluation methods, such as randomised controlled trials, are inappropriate for the study of social phenomena. This was argued because the evaluation of social programmes such as SLCN provision within a YOS setting takes place within a changing context. Within this context, disparate elements can have an impact on outcomes, therefore, determining causality is not a simple exercise, as cause and effect are not 'discrete events' in such systems (Judge et al., 2000). Within this research the impact of SLCN related provision cannot be considered in isolation as other initiatives and activities are delivered within the YOS alongside SLCN initiatives, as well as the young people being engaged in other activities outside the YOS. It is stated that in order for evaluations to be useful for decision makers, evaluations need to indicate 'what works, how, in which conditions and for whom', rather than to answer the question 'does it work?'

Pawson (2003, p472) states that;

*"The basic logic of theory-driven evaluation is very simple:*

- *evaluation seeks to discover whether programmes work;*
- *programmes are theories.*

*Therefore, it follows that:*

- *evaluation is theory-testing"*

He argues that programmes are theories because *'If we provide these people with these resources it may change their behaviour'* (Pawson, 2003, p472).

Unlike many other approaches to evaluation, realist evaluation does not use control measures due to the potential for hundreds of small comparisons to be made within and between components of a programme (Judge et al. 2000). Realist evaluation, aims instead to increase knowledge regarding mechanisms, context and outcomes through identifying, 'what works for whom in what circumstances' (Pawson & Tilly, 1997).

Realist evaluation focuses on the way's interventions may have different effects for different people. The formulae Context + Mechanism = Outcome (C+M=O) is used to express this, identifying the different configurations which are expected to inform outcomes. Mechanisms at the individual level relate to the combination of resources offered by an intervention and the reasoning that these are able to enhance in a particular context and lead to measurable or observable outcomes (Dalkin et al, 2015). The term outcome can mean different things in different evaluation scenarios. Wong et al (2016 p8) give example definitions of the term as referring to 'patterns of implementation', or 'patterns of efficiency or 'cost effectiveness for different populations', in addition to outcomes and impacts in the normal uses of the term. Context describes those features of the conditions in which programmes are introduced that are relevant to the operation of mechanisms, leading to outcomes. Context must not be confused with locality, and is often institutional, social or cultural (i.e. norms, values rules, inter-relationships, economic conditions, existing public policy) (Dalkin et al., 2018; Pawson and Tilley, 1997). Within this research, the identification of context, mechanism, outcome configurations will enabled identification of key aspects of SLCN related provision that impact on outcomes, specifically engagement of young people within the YOS.

Within realist evaluation, CMO configurations are used as explanatory formulae (otherwise referred to as realist programme theories), which are refined as the project progresses and then 'tested' through empirical data. They, in effect, postulate potential causal pathways between interventions and impacts (Lhussier et al, 2018) and provide a more nuanced account of how the intervention (or programme, as it is referred to in realist research) works (Dalkin et al, 2015).

Programme theories are the ideas and assumptions underlying how, why and in what circumstances complex social interventions work, they are the units of analysis used within realist evaluation (Best et al, 2012, Gee, 2016). Programme theories are identified and formulated through literature searches and discussions with stakeholders connected to the research. Vareilles et al (2015, p3) provide a succinct overview of the role of programme theories within realist evaluation and the movement from initial to refined programme theories;



*“It starts and ends with a theory. The evaluator begins with the formulation of the initial programme theory (PT), that is, the designers’ and other stakeholders’ assumptions around which the programme was planned, and which explains why the programme should reach its objectives. The initial PT represents an explicit hypothesis that can be tested and further developed through empirical research. The end result of a realist evaluation is a refined set of assumptions, namely, a refined PT, which provides information on what kind of interventions worked for whom, under which conditions and how.”*

The programme theories describe both the contextual circumstances where a programme would be expected to result in one or more outcomes of interest; and the mechanisms thought to operate in order to generate the outcomes (Gee, 2016).

### **6.3 Complexity and Complex Adaptive Systems**

In order to understand and interpret the complex environment surrounding the CDYOS, there is a need to examine the relationships between the elements which make up the ‘system’ within which they reside. Systems are evident in almost all fields of enquiry and range from simple processes to complex patterns. Morin (2001, cited in Marchal et al, 2014 p8) defines a system as, *‘a unit made up by and organised through relations between elements (or agents), structures and actions (or processes).’*

The dynamic processes and global patterns that emerge from the collective interactions of a system's individual components have been receiving substantial attention since the early 1990's (Eidelson, 1997). Complex systems are made up of multiple elements which interact with their environment much like any other system; however, complex systems will display emergent behaviour and unpredictability (Marchal et al, 2014). This is seen in both biological and social systems (Plsek and Greenhalgh, 2001).

In order to understand complex systems, the nature of the interactions of the elements within the system need to be considered. Within a complex system, interactions are generally non-linear; an action does not always have the same response/outcome as the result is dependent on the context of the interactions. Corresponding feedback loops provided through the systems contribute to emergent behaviour and are often

unpredictable, due mainly to the influence of people and the fact that different people will react differently to the same situation (Marchal, 2014). Complex systems can also be described as 'path-dependent' whereby the outcomes of interventions are informed by both current and past actions (Marchal, 2014).

The idea that human behaviour has significant influence within complex systems and can lead to unpredictable emergent behaviour, is a key feature of a system's ability to self-organise. Human agency has the ability to influence and lead to adaptive evolutionary change within a complex system, leading to variation in behaviour being 'the rule' rather than an exception (Marchal, 2014). This notion of an evolving and adaptive system is the central theme within complex adaptive systems theory (CAS). The CDYOS is a multi-disciplinary team, the notion therefore of the influence of human agency is important as the organisational backgrounds of the individual staff making up the CDYOS team will bear particular significance on their collective actions. Eidelson (1997 p43) defines a CAS as;

*'...a large collection of diverse parts interconnected in a hierarchical manner such that organization persists or grows over time without centralized control.'* Citing common examples such as *'The brain (e.g., Haken, 1996; Kelso, 1995), the immune system (e.g., Bremermann, 1994; Holland, 1995; Varela, Sanchez-Leighton, & Coutinho, 1992), an ant colony (e.g., Kelly, 1994; Sole, Miramontes, & Goodwin, 1993), and human society (e.g., Mainzer, 1993; Weidlich & Haag, 1983)...'* (p43).

Complex adaptive systems can be defined in terms of the following characteristics (Rouse, 2000 cited in Rouse, 2008 p18):

- *They are nonlinear and dynamic and do not inherently reach fixed-equilibrium points. As a result, system behaviours may appear to be random or chaotic.*
- *They are composed of independent agents whose behaviour is based on physical, psychological, or social rules rather than the demands of system dynamics.*
- *Because agents' needs or desires, reflected in their rules, are not homogeneous, their goals and behaviours are likely to conflict. In response to these conflicts or competitions, agents tend to adapt to each other's behaviours.*

- *Agents are intelligent. As they experiment and gain experience, agents learn and change their behaviours accordingly. Thus overall system behaviour inherently changes over time.*
- *Adaptation and learning tend to result in self-organization. Behaviour patterns emerge rather than being designed into the system. The nature of emergent behaviours may range from valuable innovations to unfortunate accidents.*
- *There is no single point(s) of control. System behaviours are often unpredictable and uncontrollable, and no one is “in charge.” Consequently, the behaviours of complex adaptive systems can usually be more easily influenced than controlled.*

The CDYOS, as well as being composed of a number of interacting components, also has the capability to self-organise, learn and adapt from experiences. A prime example of this is how speech and language gained prominence within the organisation. Following the reading of a Government report which highlighted the high prevalence of young people with speech, language and communication difficulties within young offender cohorts, the Practice Improvement Lead approached the Strategic Manager within CDYOS with her concerns that the service had not experienced the expected level of need, and perhaps there was a training need for staff to be able to identify young people who had speech, language and communication needs. All YOS's will have had access to the same report, but CDYOS's actions following receipt of said report led them down a particular route. This type of 'path dependence' demonstrates how 'history matters' through illustrating how processes have similar starting points but lead to different outcomes (Rickes et al 2007). It was this single event which triggered a 'critical state of transition' (Hood, 2012) which has led to a number of irreversible system-wide changes within CDYOS that have seen the acknowledgement of speech, language and communication needs within the service. This dimension of human agency can be argued to greatly increase the complexity of interactions observed and proposes difficulty in the formulation of causal explanations (Hood, 2012). This kind of emergent behaviour is not predictable and fits in with the notion of a CAS.

Rouse (2008) uses the American Healthcare system as an example of a CAS, putting forward the idea that the large number of 'agents' [stakeholders] connected to the healthcare system all have their own individual motivators, as well as collective goals, such as to improve healthcare. However, conflicting interests are seen amongst these

stakeholders and this in turn will affect how they interpret and deliver within the system. The table below sets out an example of how different groups of stakeholders have different interests within fields of healthcare;

*Table 5: Stakeholders and Interests in Healthcare (Rouse, 2008 p19)*

Stakeholder	Risk Management	Prevention	Detection	Treatment
Public	e.g., buy insurance	e.g., stop smoking	e.g., get screened	
Delivery System			Clinicians <sup>a</sup>	Clinicians and providers <sup>b</sup>
Government	Medicare, Medicaid, Congress	NIH, Government CDC, DoD, et al.	NIH, Government CDC, DoD, et al.	NIH, Government CDC, DoD, et al.
Non-Profits		American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, et al.	American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, et al.	American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, et al.
Academia	Business schools	Basic science disciplines	Technology and medical schools	Medical schools
Business	Employers, insurance companies, HMOs		Guidant, Medtronic, et al.	Lilly, Merck, Pfizer, et al.
<sup>a</sup> The category of clinicians includes physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals. <sup>b</sup> The category of providers includes hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and many other types of testing and treatment facilities.				

The notion of different groups of stakeholders having different interests within a system could also be argued to be the case within a YOS setting. As explored in chapter three, YOS's are composed of a multi-disciplinary staff team, coming from backgrounds and organisations including, youth work, Police, healthcare including general nurses, specialist nurses, Speech and Language Therapists, and education for example. Although all these disciplines work together towards shared organisational goals within the YOS they all have their own personal and role specific goals and aspirations which motivate them. Within the team staff belong to specific groups, for example, pre-court, post-court, victim support, education. each with their own specific competencies and methods of working. It is these elements which contribute to the organisations 'structural complexity'

As detailed previously, in addition to the make-up of the team within a YOS, it should also be taken into account that the YOS resides within the local authority. Again, similar

to healthcare systems, these additional 'layers' or networks within which it operates (Rouse, 2008) add to its complexity.

CAS's have strong tendencies to learn, adapt, and self-organize, they therefore present a challenge in terms of management and research as the system keeps redesigning itself (Rouse, 2008). Rouse (2008) suggests that within a CAS there should be an emphasis on organisational outputs and outcomes rather than inputs. This shifts the focus onto value philosophy and looks at the benefits of the outcomes. It is suggested that this focus on value is able to bring together stakeholders from the different backgrounds to understand and appreciate the management philosophy of the system and its implications. A lack of understanding within a CAS is said to result in 'dysfunctional' behaviours by one or more stakeholder groups.

Using a CAS as a framework within which to situate a realist evaluation approach to unpicking the mechanisms exhibited in CDYOS will allow for a greater understanding of complex behaviours within a complex structure.

## **6.4 Normalisation Process Theory**

Using a realist evaluation approach within a CAS framework as detailed above will produce data outputs in the form of programme theories. In order to interpret this data, Normalisation Process Theory (NPT) is used to structure and give greater meaning to the findings. It is deemed important to use established theories to assist with interpretation of results as they assist in making possible '*...robust explanations of previously or currently observed phenomena...*' (May et al, 2009). Theories in this capacity are able to assist in explaining observed uniformities of social behaviour, social organization and social change (Merton, 1968). Because realist evaluation uses the notion of generative causality, programme theories are often viewed to make sense of the complex processes underlying programmes, and to be relevant, only to the context they are exploring and not universally applicable, i.e. findings from this research will only be relevant to CDYOS. However, the use of established theories such as NPT provide

more generic explanations for relevant phenomena, proposing frameworks for analysis of data (Davidoff et al, 2015). This therefore provides further explanatory potential for the data analysis within this research.

NPT is concerned with the making routine of practices within everyday life and sustaining these practices within embedded social contexts (May & Finch, 2009). It is a theoretically informed approach which shares similarities with realist evaluation, i.e. both use generative conceptions of causality in order to explain how interventions work. It was therefore chosen as having the most explanatory potential within the already established framework for this research.

NPT is concerned with the work that people do individually and collectively to perform certain acts and achieve specific outcomes (May and Finch, 2009; May et al., 2009). It looks to understand the generative processes that underpin three core problems (May et al, 2018):

- Implementation - bringing a practice or practices into action
- Embedding - when a practice or practices may be routinely incorporated in everyday work of individuals and groups
- Integration - when a practice or practices are reproduced and sustained in the social matrices of an organization or institution

NPT explores early implementation of an intervention, and then looks beyond this to the point where an intervention becomes so embedded into routine practice that it “disappears” from view (i.e. it is normalised) (May and Finch, 2009). May and Finch (2009: 540) define normalisation as:

*‘...the work that actors do as they engage with some ensemble of activities (that may include new or changed ways of thinking, acting and organizing) and by which means it becomes routinely embedded in the matrices of already existing, socially patterned, knowledge and practices.’*

Using this approach to framing the analysis of the research will allow for the emerging themes coming out of the findings, to be re-framed in respect of key generative

mechanisms which can contribute towards the development of a service delivery model of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting.

There has been a rapid take-up of the theory as a framework for understanding the relative success or failure of innovation normalisation in health and social care contexts. The rapidly developing literature focusing on NPT in health and social care illustrates the potential of the theory to help affect positive and sustainable change. NPT allows for a coherent approach whilst working with emergent experiences and practices and therefore it has been suggested that, *‘The overarching potential of this theory... stems from its ability to uncover and work with the complexities of practice change’* (Wood 2017, p37). NPT was chosen to frame this research as it seeks to illuminate the processes by which staff ‘normalise’ or make routine a new practice, such as the routine endorsement of SLCN provision within a YOS setting.

NPT proposes that the work of implementation is operationalised through four constructs, which act as generative mechanisms; coherence; cognitive participation; collective action; and reflexive monitoring. Each of these constructs is made up of four components. The constructs and components are briefly described below in relation to their impact on the analysis.

**Coherence: sense making work**

Coherence refers to an understanding that individuals and organisations must achieve in order to promote or inhibit the routine embedding of practices. For example, do stakeholders feel SLCN related provision within a YOS setting makes sense, is it worthwhile? Under this NPT construct are four components: differentiation, communal specification, individual specification and internalisation (May et al., 2018).

Table 6: Components of Coherence

<i>Differentiation</i>	A key element of sense-making work is to understand how a set of practices are different from each other. For staff working in the CDYOS this may be the individual
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	work they undertake with young people and being able to adapt their approaches depending on the situation they are in. It looks at how staff used to work, versus how they work now (reflective practice).
<i>Communal specification</i>	Sense-making relies on people working together to build a shared understanding of the aims, objectives, and expected benefits of a set of practices. The understanding of why SLCN related provision needs to be included within the YOS for example.
<i>Individual component</i>	Coherence requires that people understand their specific tasks and responsibilities around a set of practices. This relates to stakeholders understanding of their own role in relation to the YOS and the part they have to play in supporting young people with SLCN.
<i>Internalisation</i>	Sense-making involves people understanding the value, benefits and importance of a set of practices. This is understanding the importance of their role in relation to supporting young people with SLCN.

### ***Cognitive Participation: relational work***

Cognitive Participation is the work that people do to build and sustain a community of practice around the embedding of SLCN provision within the YOS setting. Under this NPT construct are four components: initiation, enrolment, legitimation and activation (May et al., 2018).

*Table 7: Components of Cognitive Participation*

<i>Initiation</i>	When a set of practices is new or modified, a core problem is whether or not key participants are working to drive them forward (May et al., 2018). This can relate to the use of new or different practices to assist with SLCN related provision within the YOS.
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<i>Enrolment</i>	People may need to organise and reorganise themselves and others in order to collectively contribute to the work involved in new practices (May et al., 2018), such as SLCN provision within CDYOS.
<i>Legitimation</i>	An important component of relational work is ensuring the stakeholders believe the practices they are developing in response to an awareness of the need for SLCN related provision are right for them, providing ownership of their work, and that they can make a valid contribution to the young people they are working with.
<i>Activation</i>	Once a practice is underway, participants need to collectively define the actions and procedures needed to sustain it and to stay involved (May et al., 2018). This means keeping the new practices in view and connecting them with the people who need to be doing them. This relates to the sustaining of practices within the YOS following SLCN awareness training, i.e. how do we ensure practice continues and people don't revert to 'old ways'.

### ***Collective Action: operational work***

Collective Action is the operational work that people do to enact the learning from awareness raising of SLCN related issues. For example, can new learning fit with old ways? What do we normally do and how can we enhance it? Under this NPT construct are four components: interactional workability, relational integration, skill set workability and contextual integration

*Table 8: Components of Collective Action*

<i>Interactional workability</i>	This refers to the interactional work that people do with each other, with artefacts, and with other elements of a
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	set of practices when they seek to operationalise them in everyday settings (May et al., 2018). This relates to how the stakeholders work with one another in order to 'normalise' what has been learnt following awareness raising of SLCN issues.
<i>Relational integration</i>	This refers to the knowledge work that people do to build accountability and maintain confidence in a set of practices and in each other as they use them.
<i>Skill set workability</i>	This refers to the allocation work that underpins the division of labour that is built up around a set of practices as they are operationalised in the real world. It asks if practices are useful/pragmatic/feasible for use in the real world.
<i>Contextual integration</i>	This refers to the work that involves managing a set of practices through the allocation of different kinds of resources and the execution of protocols, policies and procedures (May et al., 2018). It relates to the integration of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting.

### ***Reflexive Monitoring: appraisal work***

Reflexive Monitoring is the appraisal work carried out by stakeholders to assess and understand how awareness and responses to SLCN related issues within the YOS setting affects them and others around them (May et al., 2018). For example, has 'new' practice been successful? How is it recorded? Under this NPT construct are four components: systematisation, communal appraisal, individual appraisal and reconfiguration.

*Table 9: Components of Reflexive Monitoring*

<i>Systematisation</i>	Stakeholders in any set of practices may seek to determine how effective and useful it is for them and for others, and this involves the work of collecting
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	information in a variety of formal and informal ways (May et al., 2018).
<i>Communal appraisal</i>	Communal appraisal refers to stakeholders working together in formal collaboratives or informal groups to evaluate the worth of a set of practices. This relates to sharing and discussion of practices within the CDYOS team.
<i>Individual appraisal</i>	When engaging in a new set of practices, stakeholders work experientially as individuals to appraise the effects on them and the contexts in which they are acting.
<i>Reconfiguration</i>	Reconfiguration refers to the appraisal work by individuals or groups that leads to attempts to redefine or modify practices.

### ***Use of NPT within this research***

NPT can be used alone and/or in conjunction with other theoretical perspectives that are qualitative in nature. It is able to complement qualitative research by informing, guiding and structuring one or all of the following: initial research focus and questions; initial research design, sampling and data collection; methods for data coding and analysis; analysis for emerging interpretations, conclusions and recommendations. In addition, NPT can be used at different points in the research process. It can be used throughout the duration of a research project; at any one of the stages in an ongoing research project; or to re-analyse qualitative data from a completed research project (May et al., 2018).

In relation to this research, NPT has been brought in to inform the analysis of the data generated in order to influence and enhance the findings. This approach to framing the analysis of the findings and emerging themes is particularly relevant as it has the ability of providing a theoretical framework, illustrated throughout this chapter, from which to develop a comprehensive theoretically based programme theories explaining how the work undertaken by stakeholders, individually and collectively, to incorporate SLCN

related provision within a YOS setting can become normalised in professional contexts and thus impact on service delivery.

## **6.5 Logic model**

Question one within the research aims to understand what an effective YOS with SLCN related provision should look like and also to produce programme theories to hypothesise the contextual considerations and key generative mechanisms which combine to effect SLCN related provision within a YOS setting. As this research has been undertaken alongside the CDYOS it was felt important that outputs from the findings were both informative and practical. Therefore a logic model was developed, providing an illustrative output of the findings from question one. Although in this sense, the logic model is viewed as an output it has been included here within the methodological framework as logic models can take on a variety of forms and as such can be used to identify and inform key system mechanisms and contextual factors, which prompt action and facilitate feedback in the context of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting.

As described previously, both the CDYOS and SLCN are viewed as complex systems. They therefore have multiple degrees of freedom, by the nature that they are made up of multiple elements, that are partially, but not completely independent. These elements interact both within, and with their environment, much like any other system. However, complex systems will display emergent behaviour and unpredictability, thus setting them apart from other systems (Marchal et al, 2014). Emergence recognises that it is not possible to understand things simply in terms of their components, but that understanding can only come from viewing things in their totality (Byrne & Callaghan, 2013). The study of complex systems therefore tends to focus on the structure and dynamics of the system, and it's interaction with the surrounding environment, or 'context'. This notion is important when looking to use logic models to 'map' complex systems.

A logic model is generally a visual description of a system, used to summarise how an intervention, such as incorporating SLCN related provision within a service for example, works. It does this by identifying important elements and relationships within the corresponding system. Most approaches to the formation of logic models focus on simple, linear pathway models detailing inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes and impact. They often describe how x can lead to y, with impact z. This approach is appropriate for a number of tightly controlled activities and interventions such as simple manufacturing processes; collect parts, assemble parts, finished product. However, these types of models assume a stable environment (Barnes et al. 2004) and often present a single theory incorporating a single outcome, rather than reflecting the differing outcomes and impacts for different stakeholder groups. This notion is in direct contrast to the contextual environments found in YOS's.

Emerging problems from complex systems often require more than a simple, single intervention, the interacting factors within the system often need to be reshaped in order to generate a more desirable set of outcomes (Rutter et al, 20173). Therefore, a shift in thinking is required, away from the presentation of simple, linear pathways, to the consideration of ways in which inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes and impact at all points within a system drive change if complexity is to be considered within the format of a logic model.

Complex interventions such as the incorporation of SLCN related provision within a YOS can present challenges in terms of being mapped out onto a logic model as pathways to success are variable and therefore cannot always be articulated in advance (Rogers, 2008). However, logic models have begun to be adapted and developed to provide a more detailed focus on these complex elements within their design (Pawson, 2006; Davies, 2004, 2005; Douthwaite et al., 2003a, 2003b; Pawson, 2006; Sanderson, 2000; Stame, 2004; Rogers, 2008 & Mills, 2019). This revised focus allows for the activation of what Rogers (2008, p385) has termed a 'virtuous circle', whereby initial success of an intervention within a logic model creates the conditions for further success. The use of feedback loops within complex system logic models allows for provision for those delivering and receiving the intervention, to adapt it in relation to the surrounding context,

therefore potentially changing the activities to be delivered and the outcomes that are produced (Ling, 20126). This focus links to the notion of emergence, (as described in Chapter 5), to how specific outcomes and the means to achieve them emerge during the implementation of an intervention (Rogers, 2008).

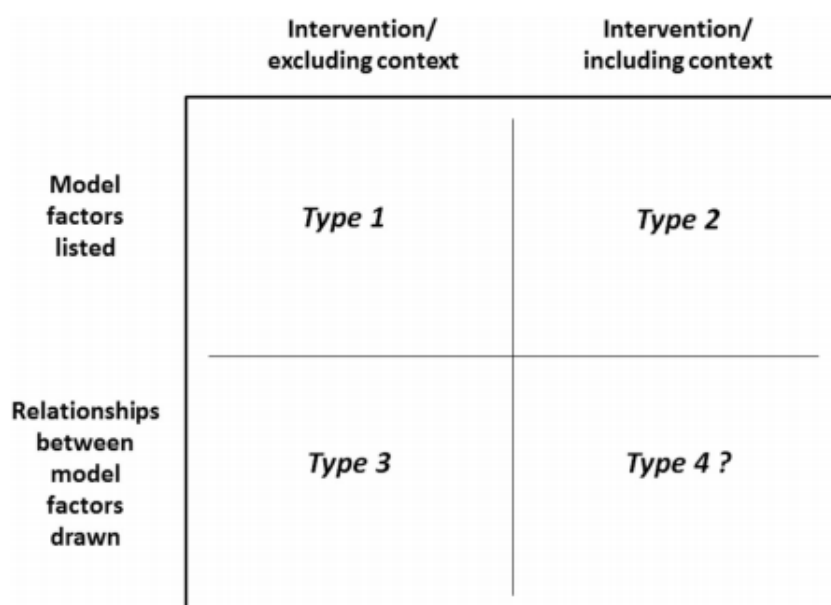
Rogers (2008, p30) states that;

*‘Importantly, these examples [complex logic models] do not involve creating messier logic models with everything connected to everything. Indeed, the art of dealing with the complicated and complex real world lies in knowing when to simplify and when, and how, to complicate.’*

Mills et al (2019), addressed the perceived lack of evidence surrounding types of logic model to address complex interventions by through the undertaking of scoping review. Within the review they identified and reported on a ‘four-pronged typology’ of logic models (Figure 10 below).

Most of the logic models they reported on fell into categories 1-3. Type 4 logic models within this typology, model the dynamic interaction between interventions and context and are therefore most appropriate for complex interventions. However, it was recognised that they are rare within the literature (Mills et al, 2019). The template for a dynamic ‘type 4’ logic model as described by Mills et al (2019) has been used as the basis for the logic model developed within this research in order to reflect the complex context of the service delivery.

Figure 10: A Typology of Logic Models in Healthcare Research (Mills et al, 2019)



## 6.6 Conclusion: Methodological framework in practice

Within this chapter, the methodological framework guiding the research has been put forward. The framework includes the use of a realist evaluation approach situated within the context of Complex Adaptive Systems approach which will allow the research to unpick the mechanisms exhibited in CDYOS and thus assist in creating a greater understanding of complex behaviours within a complex structure. Data generated within this framework is then to be interpreted through a NPT approach in order to promote generalisability and transferability of findings. In addition, the use of logic models in order to practically inform service provision within the CDYOS is also included.

The complexity of this framework reflects the complexity of the subject area. It is not felt that a simple investigative evaluation approach can be taken to the topic area as the combination of a health care based service, including the secondment of a NHS employee, being delivered within a youth criminal justice setting, situated within a local authority setting, governed by the Youth Justice Board at a national level and locally

accountable to a multi-agency board which includes young people with a range of complex needs is anything but simple. The adopted framework described within this chapter is used to frame the research and influence the data collection methods as commented on in chapters seven and ten.



## 7. Question 1: Methods

The previous chapter detailed the methodological framework guiding this research. This chapter builds on the previously presented information and details the methods used to seek out and analyse evidence in relation to question one;

1. *What does a YOS SLCN model look like – What does an effective YOS service delivery model with SLCN provision look like?*

This chapter therefore illustrates the realist evaluation approach used to frame the collection of data within question one, with considerations given to the CAS context within which it sits. NPT is then used to inform the findings with the core output being a service level delivery model based on the principles of a logic model.

Although realism and complexity function as a general methodological framework, they are not associated with any particular set of methods, with realist approaches generally referred to as method neutral (Fletcher et al., 2016). Methods should however be appropriate to the design of the research and be able to generate data which can be evaluated to shape theory, often this will include a combination of methods or techniques (Pawson & Tilly, 1997, Olsen, 2002).

It is 'how' the methods employed are used which is important within a realist perspective (Pratschke, 2003). For example, quantitative methods may be used during the initial phases of research in order to develop descriptions and comparisons, whilst in further exploratory phases of the research these same methods may be used to identify patterns and associations to aid in identifying causal mechanisms (McEvoy et al, 2006). Qualitative methods may also be used in order to gain deeper understanding and description of the observed and implied mechanisms.

This chapter details the stakeholder engagement which underpins the data collection methods, followed by identification and discussion of the methods used to answer

question one. The next chapter, then presents the findings, prior to a discussion of the findings in chapter nine.

## **7.1 Stakeholder Engagement**

Question one focuses on what an effective service delivery model for SLCN related provision within the YOS setting should look like. In order to address this question it was felt imperative to include the people actually involved with the CDYOS in terms of identifying their opinions as to what would ensure effective service delivery. Throughout the course of the research, close working relationships and collaboration with CDYOS has underpinned the research undertaken. An iterative process, including a number of meetings with senior staff at the CDYOS informed the development of the methods used in response to question one.

Realist approaches support the collection of empirical data collection and involve an iterative process between evidence collection, theory development and conclusions. Where the research is viewed to reach such a point that there is a robust connection between the hypothesis and the patterns of social activity observable in the empirical world with no new themes emerging and then to appraise the 'critical' component (i.e. influence of the researcher) of the research (Houston, 2010). This is often referred to as 'theory consolidation' (Manzano, 2016). The main principle is a focus on the interaction between observation and theory. The empirical evidence generated needs to be interpreted in terms of its contribution to deeper understanding of events relating to the SLCN provision within a YOS setting.

Central to this PhD research is the relationships built with key stakeholders. Following an initial set up meeting between Researcher, Academic Supervisor, CDYOS Strategic Manager, CDYOS Service Improvement Officer and SLT (seconded into CDYOS) key stakeholders to influence the research were identified.

The use of stakeholders is not uncommon in realist research and is often seen as essential in gaining a greater understanding of the topic in question (Harris et al, 2016). The CDYOS Service Improvement Officer was the key point of contact for this research within the service. A number of meetings were held between Researcher, CDYOS Service Improvement Officer and the seconded SLT to discuss the research in detail. This engagement included;

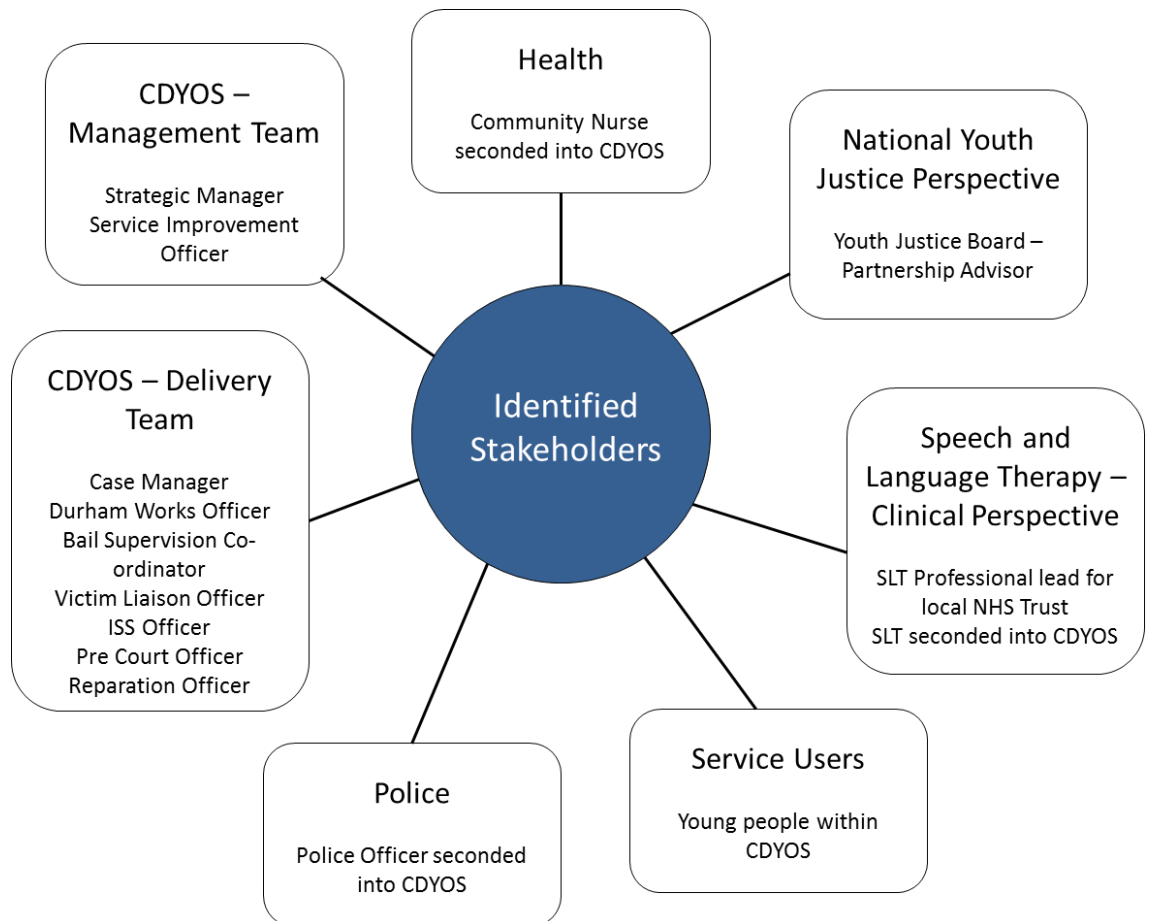
- Participating in initial scoping meetings to confirm and refine the research topic and associated parameters
- To advise on priority issues for CDYOS and how speech, language and communication fits within this framework
- To comment on iterations of methodology, advising what approaches would work best for the different groups to be engaged
- To advise on specific stakeholders to participate in interviews and assist where necessary with their recruitment
- To advise on plausibility of suggested service design model and assist with any changes deemed appropriate

One of the first discussions held with the CDYOS was an exploration of additional stakeholders that would be best placed to input and comment on the incorporation of SLCN related provision within the YOS setting in order to inform theory gleaning to support the development of initial programme theories.

Although it is recognised that discussing who to include in the research with members of CDYOS may bias the sample of stakeholders contacted, it was felt that there was no other way to firstly identify key stakeholders, and secondly have a credible introduction from the CDYOS so that the stakeholder in question would be willing to participate in the research. To limit the effects of any bias it was ensured that all meetings/interviews with identified stakeholders were confidential between Researcher and stakeholder. In addition, names of those who participated in the research were not be disclosed to the CDYOS Management team.

See figure 10 for a diagram of the stakeholders identified through discussions to be pivotal to input on the incorporation of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting.

*Figure 11: Question one identified stakeholders*



For all stakeholder groups, with the exception of 'Service Users' and 'CDYOS – Delivery Team', there was only one person aligned with the job role identified. Potential stakeholders were therefore contacted and informed about the research either via the telephone or email and provided with an overview of the research given by the Researcher, followed by an information sheet (see Appendix A) which set out the background to the research, why they were being contacted, what would be done with the information given by the participant and contact details for the CDYOS and Northumbria University to verify the legitimacy of the research. All stakeholders

approached consented to be part of the research and completed a consent form to take part (see appendix B).

Stakeholders within the CDYOS Delivery Team group were approached firstly via a staff meeting where the research was introduced and explained prior to be invited to ask questions if they had any. This was followed up by an email sent from Team Managers to all staff requesting a volunteer from each team (as identified on p11) to reflect the delivery areas to participate in the research along with a copy of the information sheet (see appendix A).

It was important to address the recruitment of service users to the research with care. As highlighted earlier in the thesis, it is acknowledged that 60-90% (Hughes et al., 2012) of young people within the criminal justice system have a SLCN of some form. Therefore, the information sheet produced to provide an overview for this research to be given to potential participants was written with the assistance of the SLT seconded into CDYOS to ensure that all information was conveyed in an easily accessible format. This ensured that informed consent could be granted by both the young people and their parents/carers (if applicable) (Appendices C-G).

Young people were purposively sampled to participate in the research. The main reason behind this was due to risk assessments. However, it also fits with the notion within realist research that purposive sampling is promoted in order to retrieve ‘...materials purposively to answer specific questions or test particular theories’ (Pawson et al, 2004 p20). It was identified by the CDYOS that it was not appropriate for some young people be contacted and then interviewed on a one to one (or with a parent/carer present) basis with a female researcher, or for some young people to have, what would be perceived as another professional (Researcher), on top of all the others currently engaged with, asking them more questions. In addition, some young people lack the necessary skills to be able to engage in an interview and so ethical questions could be raised in relation to putting the young person under unnecessary stress to yield little information for the purposes of the research.

With the constraints placed upon which young people could be contacted to participate in the research, two members of the CDYOS Delivery Team were assigned to work with the Researcher to identify and gain consent from potential young people to be included in the research. To compliment this, the SLT seconded into CDYOS also approached the young people she was working with, who were deemed appropriate to participate in the research, and provided them with the previously mentioned information sheet, and with consent passed their details onto the Researcher to make contact and gain consent to interview.

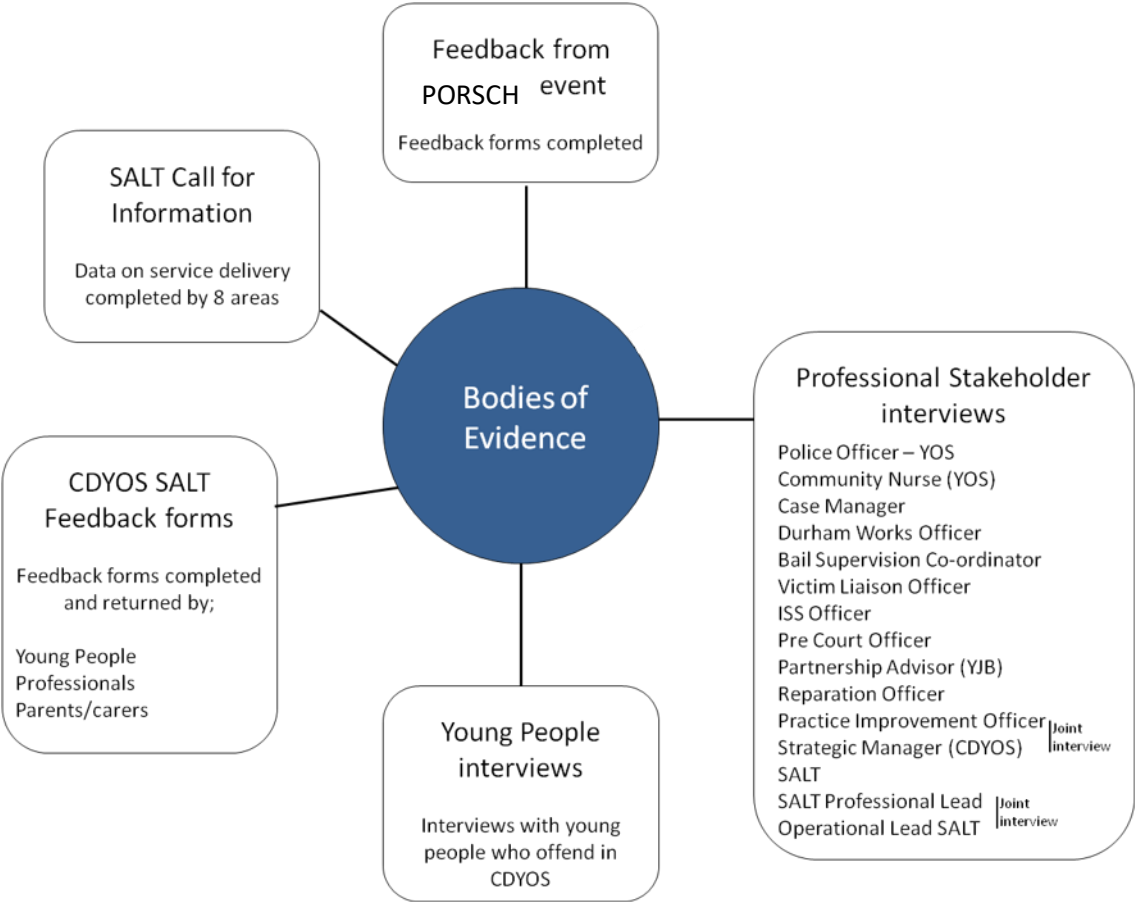
## **7.2 Question 1: Data collection**

Initial theory gleaning consultations with the CDYOS were undertaken in order to identify potential sources of evidence to feed into the research. This consultations took the form of meetings between Researcher and CDYOS in order to discuss and make sense of the original intention of the incorporation of SLCN related provision within the YOS by conceptualizing, categorizing, and ordering experiences and assumptions of the program designers and implementers (Mukumbang et al.,2019). The insights gained of the CDYOS from these stakeholders helped in exposing the emerging themes underlying the incorporation of SLCN related provision before entering the field (Manzano, 2016). to feed into the data collection relating to question one (see figure 11). These evidence strands included identified data already held and new areas which required primary data collection techniques.

A mixed methods approach was taken within the identified evidence strands in order to generate appropriate data to answer question one. This approach also allowed for triangulation of the data. Using the realist framework within a complex setting, triangulation is not about seeking validity or replication of data, but instead refers to the testing of different hypotheses and theories (Olsen, 2004). Indeed, '*...triangulation does not merely validate claims or strengthen datasets but offers ways to enrich data analysis*' (Olsen, 2004: 136).

Information is presented below about each of the data collection methods used to inform question one. Information on each method is stated alongside a brief assessment of the contribution of the data in order to understand analytical techniques proposed. In addition, a description of the knowledge expected to contribute to the research from each method is commented upon.

*Figure 12: Evidence sources*



### ***Feedback from PORSCH event***

In March 2016 an overview of the research to date was presented at a local PORSCH (Prison and Offender Research in Social Care and Health<sup>5</sup>) network event which brought together academics and practitioners to discuss issues relating to offender health. As well as providing an overview of the research, this event also provided an opportunity to gauge feedback on the research and to seek the views of the professionals attending in relation to their perceptions regarding the incorporation of services to address SLCN in youth offending services.

Following the presentation and discussion, feedback forms were distributed to the audience to complete and leave on the desks following the end of the presentation. The forms contained two open questions asking attendees to identify areas they felt are missing from current support for young people in the criminal justice system with SLCN and to identify measures of success for a service model incorporating SLCN within a YOS setting.

Unfortunately, only a very small proportion of the audience completed the forms (n=3). However, this data is still able to be utilised in the model development analysis as it presents views of professionals connected to youth justice system in relation to how they view speech and language support within the system.

### ***Young people interviews***

Four interviews were conducted with young people currently engaging with CDYOS. All of the interviewees were identified to have speech, language and/or communication needs, however, needs were not deemed acute enough to require specialist input from the SLT (note, feedback from young people who have engaged with the SLT is detailed

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<sup>5</sup> PORSCH is a network of researchers and service practitioners based in the North East of England and Yorkshire. It is dedicated to enhancing the contribution of research and development to the improvement of the health of offenders, the well-being of the communities in which they live and the reduction of offending behaviours <http://www.offenderhealthporsch.net/>



in the feedback forms section below). The main aim of the interviews was to ascertain if communication issues have created barriers to engagement with the CDYOS and to address what the young people perceive can be done to reduce any barriers identified.

See section 7.1 for an overview of how young people were approached to be included within the research.

In total six young people were recruited to be interviewed. Only four interviews however were able to take place due to a relocation and one which was deemed by other professionals not to be appropriate (due to too many profession also currently being involved in his life).

Interviews took a semi-structured format. The interview schedule was devised by the researcher with input from the seconded SLT to ensure that questions asked were appropriate and would be able to be understood by the young people recruited to take part. See appendix H for a copy of the interview schedule. Interviews were recorded and transcribed.

### ***Stakeholder interviews***

13 interviews were conducted with 15 key stakeholders identified through an initial meeting with CDYOS (see section 7.1 above). Interviews took a semi-structured approach and lasted between 20 minutes to an hour. The focus of the interview was to get an understanding from the participant of how they felt speech, language and communication services 'fit' with a young person's journey through the youth justice system and what types of services and resources they felt would be beneficial.

See section 7.1 for a detailed overview of how stakeholders were selected to participate in the research.

In order to identify if the incorporation of speech, language and communication provision within a youth offending setting improves the outcomes for young people engaged within the Youth Offending service, the 'type' and 'delivery method' of such provisions need to be explored. This therefore formed the substantive part of the interviews with stakeholders. The notion of a young person's journey through CDYOS was used to guide stakeholders thoughts as to what type of interventions were required by who at different points within the CDYOS pathway; from pre-engagement, through initial-engagement, to continued engagement and resulting in disengagement from service. This journey was mapped out and post-it notes were used to capture prominent aspects for inclusion and delivery discussed by the stakeholder (see Figure 13):

*Figure 13: Interview pathway map completed with Community Nurse*



### ***SLT call for information***

From discussions with the SLT seconded into CDYOS it became apparent that although there is very little published reports/research on the incorporation of speech, language

and communication provision within youth offending settings, a number of YOS across England have started to develop their own local model to ensure its inclusion.

Making use of a national virtual network of SLT connected to YOS, a call for information was put out in November 2015 by the SLT seconded into CDYOS on behalf of the researcher, requesting information from SLT's registered on the network. Following initial responses, a list of questions were sent out to all SLT's that responded to ensure that the information captured was comparable across geographical areas. Questions were based on obtaining information which could be used to provide an overview of the services offered, the populations covered and strategic links between health and justice services. In total eight areas responded; see appendix I for the full results obtained from this exercise.

### ***CDYOS SLT feedback forms***

In May 2016 the SLT seconded into CDYOS started to collect feedback from young people, parents/carers and professionals that she worked with. The aim of this exercise was to better understand how the work she undertakes is impacting upon the people she works with. With the consent of the CDYOS this research was able to receive anonymised copies of the feedback forms to include in the research.

From May – July 2016 38 feedback forms were received in total. These broke down to 17 from young people that had worked with the SLT, 16 from parents/carers of the young people that had worked with the SLT and 5 from professionals that the SLT had been working alongside.

The questions on the feedback forms are able to provide an insight of how the people who have experienced working with the SLT within a criminal justice context have viewed the experience and how they have, or have not, benefited from this involvement.

The feedback forms were devised by the SLT in order to allow her to understand and act upon comments received from the people she works with.

Initially the feedback forms were handed out by the SLT at the end of the last scheduled session and requested to be sent back. Overall this yielded very little results and so the SLT began to distribute the feedback forms during the last scheduled session and ask that they be completed prior to leaving.

### **7.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided an overview of the methods approach of the research. Looking at SLCN provision within a YOS setting using a complexity informed realist perspective allows for data to be generated in relation to generative mechanisms which give rise to causal regularities within the system. It will assist with identifying not only whether an SLCN provision within YOS setting is able to work, but what it is about it that works, for whom, in what circumstances and why (Pawson & Manzano-Santaella, 2012).

The methods employed to answer question one are based on a mixed methods approach in order to allow for triangulation of data and to address the complexities of the research subject.

The next chapter builds on the information presented in this chapter by presenting the results from the methods used to generate data in question one prior to moving on to question two.

## **8. Question 1: Results**

### **8.1 Introduction**

As discussed earlier in the thesis, the research has been split into two questions. The first aims to answer what a YOS SLCN model should look like and then the second explores what difference it makes. This chapter presents the findings from question one. The findings are then discussed in chapter nine which includes the development of the service level delivery model.

Previous chapters have evidenced that there is a need for speech and language initiatives for young people who offend, with the stark statistic of 60-90% of young people who offend having some form of communication disorder vs. 10% of general population (Hughes et al., 2012). However, the question of where and how these initiatives should be accessed as well as what should be included at the local level is often found missing in the literature.

As discussed in chapter two, speech and language provision in the UK is a health-based service offered predominately through the NHS (note: private practices also exist). SLT's are generally based within, and operate out of healthcare settings such as hospitals and GP surgeries, although outreach work in education settings is also not uncommon. The case study location for this research was chosen due to its novel approach to incorporating speech and language-based initiatives within the YOS. Therefore, allowing for questions to be asked about the incorporation of traditionally healthcare based services to be offered within a criminal justice setting, and what these services should and could look like. It should be noted however that the delivery of healthcare initiatives within a YOS setting is not new. The youth justice system is characterised by a preventative focus with explicit concern for the young person's welfare and YOS's bring together a range of agencies and disciplines in a single team that must, by law, include representatives from the police, Probation Service, social services, health, education, drug and alcohol services and housing officers. However, there is no national steer as to

how speech, language and communication needs should be catered for at the local level and so it is left to local YOS's to assess and shape their delivery to meet the local need.

The chapter starts by looking to identify the need for speech, language and communication related initiatives at the local (CDYOS) level in order to establish what should be included within a YOS SLCN model. Need here is built around findings from the wider literature base and locally derived data in order to detail potential prevalence of SLCN within the local population. The concept of what provision is required to address SLCN within the CDYOS setting is then addressed through the presentation of findings from the wider literature, a national call for information from SLT's working in YOS settings, locally collected information from the SLT within CDYOS and theory gleaning interviews with YOS staff, stakeholders and young people. This data is summarised at the end of the chapter and leads into the development of the aforementioned model in Chapter nine.

A discussion of findings is presented within chapter nine where initial programme theories based on the findings are illustrated through a service delivery model as to how speech, language and communication provision can be incorporated into CDYOS service delivery, identifying the key mechanisms for change. This model also provides the baseline for question two, which looks to explore what difference a SLCN related provision within a YOS setting can make.

## **8.2 Identifying need**

### ***Wider literature scope***

The wider literature scope is detailed within chapters two - four. The key messages emerging from the literature in relation to need for speech, language and communication provision are summarised in the table below (Table 6) in order to highlight need for service provision at the local (CDYOS) level.

It is very evident in the wider literature that there is a need for speech, language and communication related services for young people who offend as the numbers are so high within this population. It is expected that there will be high levels, approximately 60-90% of young people coming into contact with the YOS, who have some form of SLCN (Hughes et al., 2012). As well as SLCN it is also expected that there will be a high proportion of young people with 'complex needs' that is SLCN co-occurring with other developmental disorders (Davis & Florian, 2004 & Cross, 2011). These needs however may not be visible and many will have gone undiagnosed (Minnitt, 2018) and therefore entrance into the YOS may be the first time a young person's needs in relation to speech and language are assessed.

*Table 10: Key messages from the literature in relation to need for speech, language and communication provision at the local level*

<b>Key message</b>	<b>Links to need for service provision at the local level</b>
High prevalence levels of SLCN within YOS populations	There is expected to be a high demand for services related to SLCN provision as an estimated 60-90% of young people who offend are reported to have SLCN (Hughes et al., 2012).
Issues of co-morbidity of SLCN with other difficulties	It is expected that many of the young people coming into the YOS will have 'complex needs' (Davis & Florian, 2004) as young people with SLCN often experience other difficulties with many developmental disorders found to occur together (Cross, 2011).
SLCN as a 'hidden disability'	SLCN often go undiagnosed and therefore needs may be hidden, masked behind another more prominent diagnosis. For example, young people with SLCN are five times more likely than their peers to be classified as having learning disabilities (Botting, 2005).

SLCN incorporates a broad spectrum of needs	Linked to the co-morbidity of SLCN, there are numerous categories of SLCN, each with a different definition, and many incorporating a continuum of need, thus highlighting the individualised aspect of SLCN. Therefore, there cannot be a 'one size fits all' approach to incorporating SLCN provision within YOS's.
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### ***Locally collected data by CDYOS***

In order to identify if nationally based prevalence estimates were being seen at the local level within CDYOS a snapshot of the current caseload data held by CDYOS at the start of the data collection for question one was obtained.

#### **Caseload data overview: AssetPlus**

Each young person coming into contact with CDYOS completes a screening questionnaire called AssetPlus with a caseworker. AssetPlus is an assessment and planning interventions framework developed by the Youth Justice Board (YJB). It has been designed to provide a holistic end-to-end assessment and intervention plan, allowing one record to follow a young person throughout their time in the youth justice system.

Although data is collected at an individual level about each young person coming into contact with the CDYOS there is no simple answer to the question, does the young person have a SLCN? Previous literature has shown the need for staff involved with young people with SLCN to have an awareness of SLCN in order to both recognise the potential issues the young person is facing and also to make changes in their own behaviour as to how they interact with the young person. The Taylor review (2016) highlighted that often a young person will have undiagnosed SLCN and therefore upon



entering the YOS they will not necessarily be identified straight away as requiring any additional/different provision. AssetPlus has tried to highlight this by including a question on the universal YOS case management system which specifically asks if the young person has a SLCN. This question was new to AssetPlus upgrade which was brought in, in 2016. Questions regarding speech and language were not asked on previous versions of Asset. Within AssetPlus however, there are no follow up questions or confirmation questions to verify if a young person has a SLCN. Case workers working within the YOS have varied degrees of training and understanding as to what constitutes a SLCN and so it can be assumed that the completion of this part of the AssetPlus form is relatively subjective and heavily dependent on the case workers knowledge of SLCN when they are completing the form.

#### Caseload data snapshot

A snapshot of the current caseload of CDYOS was provided for 10/02/2016 at the start of the data collection for question 1. During this time the caseload was being moved from a previous case management system (Asset) to AssetPlus and therefore there were some gaps in new question responses, including the question relating to SLCN. In addition, due to confidentiality issues data was not able to be directly accessed and a reliance on cooperation and data extraction from staff within CDYOS was required to obtain the data.

As of 10/02/2016 there were 315 young people registered on the CDYOS caseload ranging from age 10 – 18 years. 137 young people had received the SLCN screening on AssetPlus, a single question asking if the young person has a SLCN, by a case worker (Note: Remaining 178 young people had been reviewed using previous Asset paperwork and were awaiting screening with new AssetPlus paperwork). Of these 137 young people, 20 (15%) had been referred to the SLT within CDYOS with an identified SLCN by the caseworker.

The prevalence of SLCN within CDYOS of 15% is much lower than national estimates. Based on the data available, it was not possible to identify if any of the remaining 117 young people who had received a SLCN screening had been identified as not having a

SLCN, or if they had been identified as having a low level SLCN that did not in the caseworkers opinion, warrant a referral to the SLT. It is known that all staff had received training on the new AssetPlus prior to its roll out and that SLCN awareness raising sessions for staff had taken place (the impact of this training is explored within question two if the research). Therefore, given the low prevalence rate of 15% it is assumed that a high proportion of the remaining 117 young people who had been assessed using the AssetPlus screening question and not referred to the SLT may have some form of lower level SLCN that case workers did not feel justified a referral to the SLT or their needs may have been missed.

### ***Identified need for speech, language and communication related initiatives***

Using national prevalence data, it can be estimated that between 189 and 284 young people accessing the CDYOS have some level of SLCN. It is important to remember that SLCN are placed on a continuum from minor to severe needs, therefore needs can be met in a number of different ways. For example, re-framing vocabulary used with young people to be more easily understood, or using visual representation rather than verbal may be sufficient to meet needs, whilst those with severe needs may require specialist input from a SLT.

The high numbers of estimated prevalence, compounded with the fact that a high proportion of these individuals will be experiencing additional complex needs in addition to SLCN, highlights that there is a need at the local level for some form of speech, language and communication provision which accommodates needs across the spectrum. The next section of this chapter explores what such provision should look like based on the opinions of those involved with the CDYOS and by looking at what is happening in other YOS's around England.

### **8.3 Provision of SLCN related services within a YOS setting**

Based on national and local data it is clear that there is a need for speech, language and communication provision of some description within CDYOS if the service is to effectively engage with all young people.

This section of the findings explores what provision there currently is in a number of YOS's across England (see Chapter one for more detailed overview of current SLCN provision in CDYOS). In addition, it presents findings from people involved with the SLT within CDYOS and interviews with CDYOS staff and key stakeholders in order to understand how SLCN provision could be included within the CDYOS in development of a service design model. These findings are then brought together to identify key themes to inform considerations for service provision. These themes are then discussed in more detail within Chapter nine.

#### ***National SLT call for information***

Following initial discussions with the SLT working into the CDYOS it became apparent that although there is very little published reports/research on the incorporation of speech, language and communication provision within youth offending settings, a number of YOS's across England have started to develop their own local model to ensure its inclusion. The national SLT call for the information evidence therefore sought to identify practice-based examples of the incorporation of speech, language and communication provision within YOS from around England.

This information was crucial as it would be able to provide a summary of the work ongoing around the country in relation to SLT work into youth offending settings and therefore provide a base to compare and contrast the work at CDYOS. Although it can be argued that each individual geographical area will need to have specific individual services to meet their need, it is interesting to note similarities and outliers in respect to service provision between areas. In addition, the information highlights provisions in

other areas that are not currently provided in Durham that may be of interest to explore further.

Making use of a national virtual network of SLT connected to YOS, a call for information was put out in November 2015 which consisted of an invitation to be part of the research informing this PhD. The invitation was sent out to the national mailing list on the researcher's behalf by the SLT seconded into CDYOS as the researcher was not a member of the group. The invitation provided an outline of the research and asked those willing to participate to contact the researcher directly via email. In total 8 SLT's replied stating they would participate in the research.

A list of standardised questions (see Appendix I for breakdown of questions and results) was sent out to all SLT's that responded to ensure that the information captured was comparable across geographical areas. Questions were based on obtaining information which could be used to provide an overview of the services offered by SLT's within YOS's, the populations covered and strategic links between health and justice services.

The questionnaire was completed by eight SLT's working into different geographical areas within England. Areas included; Sussex; Leeds; County Durham; Durham, Darlington and Middlesbrough (Tees); Luton; Bexley; Nottingham; and, Bath and North East Somerset. However, of the eight areas which completed the questionnaire, only six have been reported within these findings as one stated that they currently do not undertake any work with a YOS (Nottingham) and another failed to complete the questionnaire (Bexley).

Although only 6 areas participated in this data collection exercise, there was a good geographical spread of responses. In addition, because this element of the research aimed to gauge an understanding of other service models where speech, language and communication provision had been implemented within a youth justice setting, it was able to provide rich information in respect to locally developed practices and service delivery through a case study approach.

The questionnaire had four main sections; contractual information; assessments; interventions delivery; training delivery. The results below are presented in line with each of these sections.

Five out of the six questionnaires were completed by SLT's seconded from the NHS into a YOS. The remainder was completed by an NHS based SLT who worked in NHS based services connected to liaison and diversion services for young people.

Although it was not captured on the questionnaire, detailed discussions with the SLT in Durham highlighted the importance of the retention of links to the NHS for SLT's even if they are working in other areas such as YOS in order to ensure relevant clinical supervision can be undertaken serving the purpose of a balance, check services offered by the SLT and also as a means of providing relevant technical support which could not be accessed outside clinical based health services, such as the NHS.

All SLT services covered community YOS populations; one also provided some cover to a local secure young people's estate.

Five of the SLT's reported that they provided assessments or screening for SLCN to all young people on entry to the YOS with one looking to provide assessment on entry in the future. All respondents stated reports were produced in relation to the outcome of assessments once complete and Durham, Darlington and Middlesbrough (Tees) planned to do this once screening was set up.

***Table 11: Assessments delivered by SLT's within YOS's***

<b>Assessments</b>	<b>Area</b>					
	<b>Sussex</b>	<b>Leeds</b>	<b>County Durham</b>	<b>Durham, Darlington and Middlesbrough (Tees)</b>	<b>Luton</b>	<b>Bath and North East Somerset</b>
SLT provides assessments?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not yet but plan to	Yes	Yes

or screening SLCN on entry						
SLT produces reports following assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Plan to once screening is set up	Yes	Yes

Four of the SLT's commented that direct interventions (interventions working generally on a one-to-one basis with a young person to address specific need) related to SLCN are delivered to the young people with identified SLCN within the YOS. One area is currently looking to deliver direct interventions but is not set up to do so just yet, and the final area is based in an NHS setting and does not deliver services within the YOS.

Direct interventions reported to be delivered varied. They ranged from individual level psychological therapies to more universal interventions such as understanding communication needs. However, this question consisted of a free text box and so some SLT's may have felt inclined to provide more or less detail than others. Responses from the four areas included:

*'Currently carrying out a short intervention block on recognising and regulating emotions. Looking to potentially carry out short blocks of intervention (such as vocabulary or narrative intervention) for 4-6 sessions but this has not as yet been done'* (SLT Sussex)

*'Direct therapy'* (SLT Leeds)

*'YES, vocab, understanding communication needs'* (SLT Durham)

*'Complete the CHAT [NHS assessment tool], look at their auditory memory, do the time screening assessment, informally look at the TALC [speech and language assessment tool] and then complete the CELF-3 [language assessment tool] if appropriate. I then liaise with education settings and write a report with*

*recommendations. If therapy is indicated I will provide sessions for as long as needed (dysfluency, telling the time, concepts, pragmatics etc).'* (SLT Luton)

Indirect service provision was provided by all SLT's. When asked what this consisted of, responses again varied. This, as with the question on direct service provision, was an open text box question and so the range and detail of responses may be a true reflection of services provided or may be limited to the amount of detail the SLT felt inclined to include. However, most of the responses included at least one element relating to the support and advice given to caseworkers within the YOS in order to 'upskill' them. In addition, making resources more users friendly through the inclusion of flashcards for example was also stated by three of the SLT's.

Table 12: Indirect interventions delivered by SLT's

Interventions	Area					
	Sussex	Leeds	County Durham	Durham, Darlington and Middlesbrough (Tees)	Luton	Bath and North East Somerset
Support and advice for case workers	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Develop programmes and resources		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prepare reports for external stakeholders (i.e. solicitors)			Yes			Yes

Linked to the indirect service provision, a specific question set on training delivery was included within the questionnaire. All SLT's reported to provide SLCN awareness training to YOS staff and key stakeholders including; police, magistrates, schools, custody staff,

court staff, drug and alcohol support agency and referral order panel members. Formal training again varied between areas but core themes running through each included understanding and identification of SLCN, development of strategies and methods of engagement of young people with SLCN and relevance of SLCN within criminal justice settings.

*Table 13: Training themes delivered*

Interventions	Area					
	Sussex	Leeds	County Durham	Durham, Darlington and Middlesbrough (Tees)	Luton	Bath and North East Somerset
Understanding and identification of SLCN	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Development of strategies and methods of engagement of young people with SLCN	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Relevance of SLCN within criminal justice settings	Yes		Yes			Yes

Although a small sample size, the SLT call for information produced a valuable glimpse of current activities relating to SLCN provision within YOS across England. The



incorporation of a SLT within the YOS's included in this research was not simply a medical intervention for the service. There was evidence of YOS service development through both direct and indirect activities with clear connections between the SLT, YOS staff and external stakeholders all involved in the delivery of initiatives.

There is a consistency across the geographical areas to upskill and inform staff within the YOS's about SLCN through specific training undertaken by the SLT. In addition, again there is a consistency to adapt, develop and produce new resources (such as flash cards) to enable the YOS to become more communication friendly.

Interestingly, nearly all activities which were stated to be provided by SLT's in other areas were already being provided either fully or in part by the SLT at CDYOS. The exception to this was the work into secure settings which is outside the remit of the SLT in CDYOS. In this respect, there is little for CDYOS to learn and take away in terms of developing new practices. However, the consistent approaches with other areas provides support and assurance that their practices are in line with, and often exceed, those in other areas.

### ***CDYOS SLT feedback forms***

Prior to becoming involved with this research, the SLT from CDYOS had devised her own feedback forms in order to collect feedback from young people, parents or carers, and other professionals she was involved with. The questions on the feedback forms provide an insight of how the people who have experienced working with the SLT within a criminal justice context have viewed the experience, and how they have, or have not, benefited from this involvement. The aim of this exercise was to better understand how the work she undertakes is impacting upon the people she works with. As this data collection was initiated by the SLT, the content of the questionnaire, delivery and collection method were not able to be influenced. With the consent of the CDYOS, anonymised copies of the feedback forms were received to include within this research to assist in understanding SLCN provision within a YOS setting.

From May – July 2016, 38 feedback forms were received in total. This included 17 from young people that had worked with the SLT, 16 from parents or carers of the young people that had worked with the SLT, and 5 from professionals that the SLT had been working alongside.

Initially the feedback forms were handed out by the SLT at the end of the last scheduled session and requested to be sent back. Overall this was reported to yield very little results, and so the SLT began to distribute the feedback forms during the last scheduled session and ask that they be completed prior to leaving.

Results have been broken down by the three feedback form types; parents or carers, young people and other professionals.

### ***Parents and carers***

16 feedback forms were completed by parents and carers in total. See below for question responses

*Table 14: Parents or carers feedback form responses*

(Note: Susan is the name of the SLT working in CDYOS)

Question	Sample size	Response
Was Susan the 1st speech and Language Therapist your child worked with?	16	94% (n=15) Yes 6% (n=1) No
Was it useful for your child to work with Susan?	16	94% (n=15) Yes 6% (n=1) No
Did Susan give you any ideas to make it easier for your child to understand, talk or get on with people?	16	94% (n=15) Yes 6% (n=1) No
Have you changed the way you talk with your child since working with Susan?	11	72% (n=8) Yes 18% (n=2) No 9% (n=1) Don't know

Has it been easier to deal with your child's behaviours since working with Susan?	11	55% (n=6) Yes, it's a bit easier 27% (n=3) Their behaviour was fine anyway 9% (n=1) Don't know 9% (n=1) No, it's just the same
Were you happy with where your child worked with Susan?	16	100% (n=16) Yes
Were you happy with when your child worked with Susan?	16	94% (n=15) Yes 6% (n=1) No
Overall what rating would you give Susan's work?	16	69% (n=11) Excellent 19% (n=3) Very good 6% (n=1) Good 6% (n=1) Not good
What was the most useful thing you got from Susan's work?	10	Better understanding of why [child name] behaviour is different to others Getting her to listen Helping [child name] in school talking to MR. Good getting help. Am very happy for the help helping to slow talking down when talking to my child Nothing Susan gave me sheets with games on that I could play with him That we thought what [child name] problems appears to be correct To talk in small words with son Understanding [child name] frustration Finding out how my daughter is still finding school work so hard and that she still has poor understanding of others talking to her and understanding the world in a bigger picture
Please write below anything else you want to tell us about working with Susan	6	I feel I've gained a lot of helpful information about why [child name] feels angry and frustrated. Susan is a fantastic help, really appreciated the visits  I would like to thank Susan for all the help she gave us and the support she offered. I

	<p>feel she was there for me and [child name] at a difficult time in [child name] life, sometimes the only person. I will be sad not to work with her but grateful for her help</p> <p>She didn't listen to mine or my daughters opinions on anything she did. When asked not to put things in reports that we didn't want in, she did it anyway despite telling us she wouldn't which is not in my opinion very professional.</p> <p>Understanding</p> <p>Was a very easy person to talk to</p> <p>Susan was welcoming and very understanding of my daughters problems and Susan has done her utmost best to help my daughter and myself. Has been lovely to know her for a short while</p>
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Of the 16 completed questionnaires, there was one respondent which was negative in relation to all question responses. Due to confidentiality issues it was not possible to source further contextual information surrounding this response in order to ascertain why they felt this way about the input from the SLT.

Overall feedback from parents/carers was very positive in respect to the work their young person had undertaken with the SLT (Susan). The vast majority of young people had not previously been in contact with a SLT suggesting that their SLCN had not been previously diagnosed. This is in line with findings from the literature which evidence the high rates of undiagnosed SLCN within youth offending populations for both young people and adults.

It is interesting to note that the most useful aspects out of the work with the SLT related to 'tools' gained by the parents/carers in assisting their understanding of SLCN and helping them be able to communicate more effectively with their young person.

Suggesting that need not only comes from the CDYOS and young people involved, but by the family surrounding the young person also.

### ***Young people***

17 young people completed the feedback forms. Due to data confidentiality it cannot be known if there is a corresponding parent or carer questionnaire that was completed alongside the young person's questionnaire. See below for question responses

***Table 15: Young people feedback form responses***

<b>Question</b>	<b>Base size</b>	<b>Response</b>
Was Susan Stewart the 1st Speech and Language Therapist you worked with?	17	88% (n=15) Yes 6% (n=1) No 6% (n=1) Don't know
Was working with Susan useful?	17	71% (n=12) Yes 24% (n=4) Don't know 6% (n=1) No
Did Susan give you or people you talk with, any ideas to make it easier for you to understand, talk or get on with people?	17	65% (n=11) Yes 29% (n=5) Don't know 6% (n=1) No
Did the ideas Susan gave your parent(s), carer(s), or people you work with, make them any better at talking and listening to you?	12	33% (n=4) Yes 42% (n=5) Don't know 17% (n=2) No they still struggle 8% (n=1) They weren't given any ideas
Were you happy with where you worked with Susan?	17	88% (n=15) Yes 12% (n=2) Don't know
Were you happy with when you had appointments with Susan?	17	71% (n=12) Yes 24% (n=4) Don't know 6% (n=1) No
Overall what rating would you give Susan's work?	16	56% (n=9) Excellent 19% (n=3) Very good 6% (n=1) Good 6% (n=1) Okay 13% (n=2) Don't know

What was the most useful thing about working with Susan?	12	Helping me understand people more I don't know I found out I never needed speech and language therapy Nothing Probably is but I don't know what to write She can understand. Feels like she is very helpful She helped me understand things She tried to help with my memory She helped me Talking She helped me out with my hearing I had test on what I can do and can't with understanding things
please write below anything else you want to tell us about working with Susan	8	I understood Susan. She is also helping me at school nothing She is nice She's nice Very good Thank you for listening to me Nothing Thank you

Confirming the parent/carer responses, the majority of young people stated that they had not been seen by a SLT before. Again, views about the services received and the SLT worker are positive overall with one negative respondent in relation to most questions.

### ***Other professionals***

Five professionals completed the feedback forms. Due to data confidentiality and omission of a question asking what profession the respondent was from it cannot be known what profession each of the responses to this questionnaire relate to.

Table 16: Other professional's feedback form responses

Question	Base size	Response
Has Susan helped you understand the speech language and communication needs (SLCN) of the young person you both worked with?	5	80% (n=4) Yes 20% (n=1) No
Were you given strategies to help this young person with understanding, talking or getting on with people?	5	80% (n=4) Yes 20% (n=1) No
Did working within Susan change how you worked with this young person?	5	80% (n=4) Yes 20% (n=1) No
Has working with Susan changed the way you work with other young people?	4	75% (n=3) Yes 25% (n=1) No
How useful was the report Susan completed about the young person?	4	50% (n=2) Really useful 50% (n=2) Very useful
Overall what rating would you give Susan's work?	5	80% (n=4) Excellent 20% (n=1) Not good
What was the most useful thing about working with Susan?	5	<p>Being able to talk through strategies and how these can be used for the student in question and also wider school use</p> <p>Having the professional guidance around best ways to support our student. As well as support in the pulling together of the student's EHCP</p> <p>I believe on this occasion, given that I had already known [young person] for sometime there was no particular benefit. I highlighted the difficulty at aged 12 years, however due to [young person's] case being transferred and on some occasions her refusal this to date has still not been fully assessed. The CHAT took far too long and [young person] didn't fully engage also admitted to guessing at the exercise completed by Susan on the day.</p>

		<p>I was able to speak to Susan [SLT] about a working case, bounce ideas off her and create worksheets for a specific young person who had difficulties understanding things. Three worksheets were created for this young person one relating to dangers of going miss</p> <p>Observing how she interacted with other professionals and young people and taking on board some of the strategies she uses. Reports also very useful</p>
<p>Please write down any other comments you would like to make about Speech and Language Therapy for young people who offend</p>	4	<p>An interesting way of engaging with young people in terms of widening the screening process</p> <p>I think it has been essential having a link in with the SLCN team its raised our understanding of the issue and has given us the tools to try and support those coming through the service with a SLC need. A lot of people with a SLCN who come through YOS often get mistaken by services for being difficult however, if they'd had the support from the beginning they may not have come through to the YOS at all. It's sad to see such young people criminalised when the support could have prevented such action. I think schools need to be trained and mindful of children displaying such difficult behaviours and like ourselves use the screening tool to assess the needs of the young person displaying difficult behaviours to establish if there is a difficulty and get the support in place before they end up in the YOS.</p>



		<p>It has been wonderful having the support of the service in general this academic year</p> <p>Myself and [young person] felt that the session focused at a much younger age. [young person] did not use this particular word, however through her description I would suggest patronising was what she meant. In terms of young people not understanding the process or court orders etc. I feel that with a consistent approach the young people often do know more about this than what has been given credit for. I believe a lot of our young people struggle with communication difficulties, however, even when they are assessed and identified there is not sufficient there is not sufficient services to support or it takes too long.</p>
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There were differing views from professionals engaged with the SLT, four reported very positive views and one reported a negative view. The positive views focused on having the SLT as a sounding board, being able to discuss particular young people in order to develop appropriate courses of action. This suggests a possible felt need by the professional in terms of the level of their understanding around SLCN and what actions they should take, turning into expressed need when speaking to the SLT in identifying actions.

The negative comment suggested that the SLT needed to change the language she used and that in general there are not sufficient services available to meet need in respect of SLCN seen in the young people accessing the youth criminal justice system.

## ***Discussion***

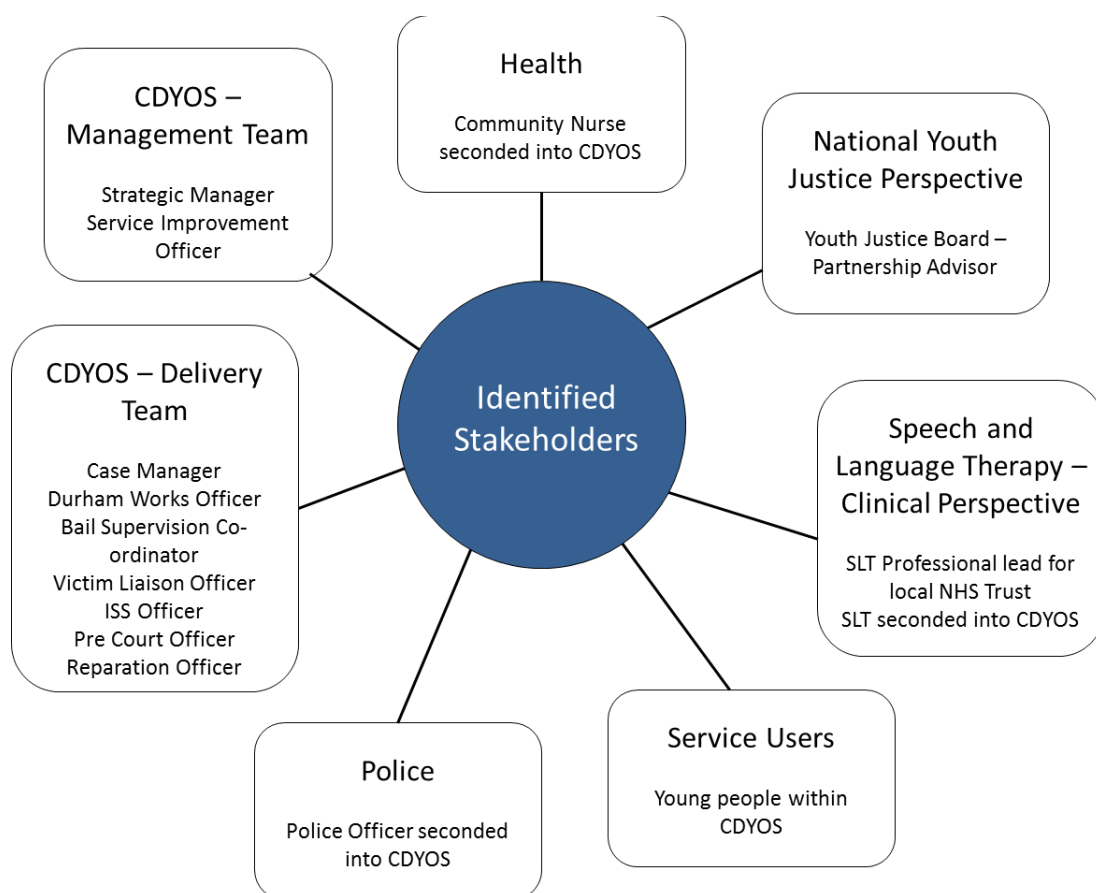
Although small in number, initial feedback received from those engaging with the SLT highlights how learning about SLCN has changed the behaviours of both young people with SLCN and those people surrounding them (parents/carers and professionals). Learning about SLCN has enabled young people to better understand other people and themselves more. In addition, it has given the people surrounding the young people with SLCN the skills and understanding to better engage with them. However, there was also comment that the input received was perceived to be inappropriate. With such a small base size it is difficult to ascertain if this view will also be reflective of others who receive input in the future. Ensuring the input therefore reflects need of the individuals should be considered with future engagement.

Overall engagement with SLT has been seen to prompt positive behaviour change by young people, parents or carers and professionals. In having a better understanding of SLCN and the issues young people may face as a result, it can be suggested that professionals and parents or carers are able to more effectively engage with the young people. In addition, the sessions are viewed to help equip young people to better understand themselves and their behaviours. This has implications in terms of the model development as it is evident that professionals surrounding young people with SLCN need to have an awareness of the issues SLCN can have in order to ensure effective engagement with the service. However, awareness must reflect perceived individual need in order to be considered useful.

## ***CDYOS stakeholder interviews***

Key stakeholders were identified in collaboration with CDYOS management at the start of the project (see Chapter 7). They included the following seven core groups;

*Figure 14: Identified key stakeholders*



Thirteen interviews were undertaken with 10 CDYOS members of staff (7 delivery team staff, 1 health related staff and 2 strategic management staff) and 5 key stakeholders, including Police, Youth Justice Board and community SLT. Note: interviews with service users are reported separately within this chapter as the focus of the interviews was very different.

Interviews took a semi-structured approach and lasted between 20 minutes to an hour. The focus of the interview was to get an understanding from the participant of how they felt speech, language and communication services 'fit' within the youth justice system, and what types of services and resources are viewed to be beneficial.

In order to identify what YOS SLCN provision within the CDYOS setting, the concept of a young person's journey through CDYOS was used within the interviews. This journey guided respondents' thoughts in the interviews as to need and potential resources required at different points within the CDYOS pathway with a view to inform the model for question two. The pathway started at pre-engagement, working through initial-engagement, to continued engagement and ended in disengagement from the service. These four key points of the pathway were identified following discussions with the CDYOS management team. Within the interview, this journey was mapped out and post-it notes were used to capture prominent aspects for inclusion and delivery discussed by the stakeholder.

All interviews were transcribed prior to analysis. A thematic content analysis approach was then taken, whereby extraction of meanings and concepts from the interview transcripts was undertaken in order to examine and record emerging themes. It was decided not impose the structure of the 'journey' on the analysis as although it was a useful tool for guiding the interview respondent to think about how young people are engaged with, comments on the whole were more general in nature and could be applied to multiple stages of the journey.

It was interesting to note that throughout all the interviews, although respondents were asked what would the 'ideal' provision be, what would the 'ideal' service look like etc., in the majority of instances, references and comments made reflected what was already being delivered within the CDYOS. It cannot be determined if these responses were given because they are perceived to be the ideal service conditions or if these answers were given as this is the only service design participants know, and because it is felt to 'work'. With this in mind, some of the findings presented below, although asking participants about ideal service conditions to contribute to the development of a service model, read more of an evaluative summary about the current SLCN provision within CDYOS.

### ***Coding framework***

The primary aim of the interviews was to establish what provision related to SLCN should be incorporated within the CDYOS, or youth justice interventions more widely. Analysis of the interviews was an iterative process reflecting initialisation, construction, reflection and finalisation phases of thematic analysis (Vaismoradi et al, 2016).

All transcripts were reviewed with initial notes on meaningful recurrent ideas and key issues made in order to immerse the researcher in the data. Further passes of the data was then made to identify explicit and implicit ideas emerging from the data in order to understand meanings behind the emerging theme development (Thompson et al, 2004). Codes were developed to identify key elements and dimensions within the text along with relational themes to break the data down into manageable sections. Themes and codes were verified and confirmed by an iterative processes of reviewing the data, and then repeating the process in order to identify further themes and codes. This process saw the raw transcription data transform from high-level abstraction to the development of themes to allow for an examination of similarities and differences (Polit & Beck, 2010). Judgement of the researcher was used to inform the development of themes and codes, and to interpret meanings within the data. Table 17 below details the initial and final coding framework used in the analysis of the stakeholder interviews.

*Table 17: Stakeholder interview coding framework*

Initial coding framework	Secondary Code	Final code
Have to make own assessment quickly of the young person's needs Being able to ask the right questions of the young people Participation in SLCN awareness training Need to 'pitch' communication individually Understanding each young person's needs Need to build relationship between worker and young person Need for open communication between worker and young person Need to be more aware of SLCN - be a bit smarter Need for all staff connected to young people to be aware of SLCN changing ways of working Think outside the box - identify alternative ways of working with young people Problems with identifying SLCN - often masked/hidden by young people	Staff skills	Awareness of SLCN
Police use a lot of jargon - not understood Use own knowledge to interpret 'jargon' for young people Confusion in interpreting criminal justice language	Confusing terminology Interpretation of terminology Confusing terminology	Communication
Need for speak easy transferable tools to assist with interpretation of terminology Changes observed in practices - more involvement of different professions now compared to a few years ago All staff to have the right 'tools' to effectively engage with young people with SLCN Positive effect SLT has had on identifying SLCN and providing reports to court	Confusing terminology Collaboration Staff skills	Resource

<p>SLC needs assessment for all young people</p> <p>All information needed pre-loaded onto laptop</p> <p>Simplifying paperwork for young people so that it is understood by all</p> <p>Context of seeing the young people - time pressures need to get in and out</p> <p>Use of printed resources to assist with explaining criminal justice concepts</p> <p>Able to use speech and language assessments to help identify any SLCN</p> <p>Able now to refer to SLT if have any significant concerns re. SLCN</p> <p>Making resources more user friendly</p>	Resource	
<p>CDYOS Leadership team - strong focus on education and barriers to engagement</p> <p>Commitment to improve service delivery to meet local need</p> <p>Buy-in from senior leadership team to improve service delivery</p> <p>Importance of SLT to be embedded within the CDYOS</p> <p>Development of staff champions for SLCN</p> <p>Buy-in from external stakeholders</p>	Service delivery	Service delivery
<p>Need to link with mental health nurse</p> <p>Need to link with external stakeholders i.e. Police</p> <p>Using specialist services where needed in YOS setting</p> <p>Strong cohesion within CDYOS - able to suggest system wide ideas/changes</p> <p>Using SLT as a sounding board for new ideas re. ways of working</p> <p>Complimenting staff mix within CDYOS</p>	<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Staff skills</p>	Staff mix

Likable nature of seconded SLT - she wants to be engaged and make changes		
Need for links between YOS and wider teams such as mental health and education	Collaboration	System
Young people not understanding what is going on - criminal justice processes	Awareness of processes	
Need for more to be done to identify need at police stations	Staff skills	
Impact of liaison and diversion services - should pick up young people earlier in the system and address any health issues	System processes	
Links between health and YOS		
Need to address 'gap' in provision - young people shouldn't get to YOS before a SLCN is picked up		
Being aware of SLCN (from training received) has changed working practices	SLCN awareness raising	Working practices within CDYOS
Thinking outside the box following training on SLCN to change working practices and engage young people	Staff skills	



## ***Findings***

Awareness raising of SLCN was seen through the interviews to be at the core of changes within the CDYOS in relation to incorporating SLCN provision. Knowing about and understanding SLCN and how it can impact on young people engaging with CDYOS prompted changes in communication, resource development, service delivery, staff mix, system developments and ultimately working practices within CDYOS.

Interviews with the CDYOS make up the majority of the data presented below. However, interviews with external stakeholders (presented alongside staff interviews below) were also seen to confirm many of comments made by CDYOS staff. Findings are presented below under each of the core theme headings with findings from each of the stakeholder groups presented together in order to identify commonalities and differences.

### **Awareness of SLCN**

CDYOS management highlighted that prior to having the involvement of the SLCN they *'hadn't been looking at things with a speech and language head on...'* and therefore training was needed for the staff to start thinking about speech, language and communication embedded practices within the delivery of the CDYOS.

All the CDYOS workers commented on the formal training they had received within CDYOS on SLCN awareness from the seconded SLT. Overall, comments in relation to the training were very positive and there was a strong sense that the training had complimented previous knowledge and facilitated the creation of new working practices based on the learning.

When discussing with the seconded SLT, the training provided it emerged that the training was based on two key areas, her previous experience of working with young people in core services and having spent time shadowing and getting to know CDYOS and how it operates. The previous experience was commented to assist with knowing how to engage with young people, how to talk to them, what assessments to undertake, what therapy is available and then what therapy is likely to work. The time spent within CDYOS allowed the SLT to *'...learn the language of youth justice...'* (SLT A) and to

understand criminal justice processes. It also allowed time to build relationships and get to know staff within CDYOS. This learning coupled with previous knowledge was stated to allow the translation of SLCN practices into a context of young people with very complex needs.

As well as general awareness it was stated to be important to contextualise the differences between young people in core SLCN services and young people in the CDYOS. It is felt that within core services, young people are typically in education and have a number of support networks including family around them. In contrast, the young people in CDYOS with SLCN were stated to typically have been excluded from school, or in alternative placements. Many parent/carers have also been identified to have their own needs and young people often have mental health or substance misuse needs resulting in a more complex set of emerging needs. All of these factors were highlighted by the seconded SLT as needing to inform training to ensure that it was relevant.

The training delivered in some senses was seen to simply provide awareness, staff stated that they had previously been unaware of SLCN and the impacts such needs could have a young person engaging with CDYOS. The simple act of being made aware was suggested to prompt behaviour change in terms of working practices;

*‘...if your eyes are open your more likely to see, to identify and pick up.’ (CDYOS Worker G)*

*‘...we’re a lot more switched on about it [SLCN]’ (CDYOS Worker A)*

*‘... [seconded SLT] has clearly been a bit of a watershed moment...’ (CDYOS Worker B)*

*‘...it’s [training] really opened up the range of tools people use to engage with young people.’ (Health A)*

Through the training staff were able to reflect on their practices and assess if there were better ways of engaging the young people they work with. One example was given where a CDYOS worker had reflected that her meetings prior to undertaking the training had been *‘...totally reliant on verbal communication...it’s all been told, nothing else.’* (CDYOS Worker D). This realisation has subsequently led to a revision of this particular type of

meeting. Flash cards with pictorial explanations of complex language are now reported to be used, in order to help young people understand the more technical language used.

Training was also stated by one CDYOS worker to ensure that non-intentional discrimination was reduced. She felt that if staff could recognise SLCN they could then put measures in place (i.e. using word buster cards to help explain language meaning) to ensure that they were able to engage just as well as someone without an SLCN.

The training also challenged pre-conceptions. One respondent provided the example of how following the training he is now aware that no eye contact should not always be viewed as an unwillingness to engage. That in fact, there may be several reasons why the young person cannot engage in eye contact.

The training appears to have prompted workers to 're-think' about how they engage with young people and highlight to importance of adapting to individual need. One respondent noted how bringing a focus on SLCN into the team has assisted her in being reminded that everyone is different and the requirement to consider everyone's needs.

*'...sometimes you take for granted that they [young people in CDYOS] understand what you're saying...sometimes [young people's actions] taken as being obstructive...but actually they don't understand what is going on...'* (CDYOS Worker E).

The training has also helped CDYOS staff to identify what SLCN actually is and how they can now identify needs.

*'[SLCN secondment] brought speech, language and communication to the forefront, before that we weren't very equipped to identify it.'* (CDYOS Worker F).

The seconded SLT stated that the training aimed to change the knowledge base of staff, in terms of both awareness and knowledge of strategies to engage with young people with SLCN. From the interviews with CDYOS staff these aims can be seen to have been met.

Although the benefits of participating in training were highlighted it was also suggested that there could be some resistance to participation on training. It was stated that staff already have large caseloads and therefore building in attendance on additional training may not be seen as a priority in an already busy work schedule.

Wider engagement on awareness training was suggested to need to include parents as often there is a perception of the young people being ‘...ignorant’ or ‘...they just kind of normalise it and don’t see it.’ (CDYOS Worker A).

The knowledge gained through the training was stated to be required to help equip staff with the tools to allow them to respond to situations they find themselves in. Many of the CDYOS workers hinted at a need to be able to ‘read’ the situation, to know what is going on with the young person, to understand the environment and to appreciate how the young person may be feeling. Often CDYOS workers report having to take in a lot of information and make these judgements quickly. CDYOS workers stated that:

*‘You go in and you see a lot, [you] read between the lines...you’re very sensitive to the nuances of what’s going on’ (CDYOS Worker B).*

*‘...you get a feeling for it [SLCN] straight away when you meet the young person...’ (CDYOS Worker F)*

*‘...you’re listening more than you’re speaking sometimes. Not so much what is said, but what isn’t said, and sometimes how it’s said...’ (CDYOS Worker D)*

In addition, one worker highlighted that often assessments need to be made quickly at face value when they are brought into see a young person within a police custody setting. There is insufficient time to undertake a complete assessment and therefore the member of staff needs to have sufficient understanding of SLCN in order to identify. This staff member highlighted that,

*‘Because of what Susan [seconded SLT] tells ya, you can ask the right questions... to hopefully get the right answers...’ (CDYOS Worker G).*

Within this context of not always having time with the young person, staff reported the need to have the skills to engage with the young person and to build rapport. The need

for young people to *‘...feel comfortable with who they’re working with.’* (CDYOS Worker A) was described as a key factor in being able to effectively engage with young people within the CDYOS.

In building rapport between CDYOS workers and young people, conversations were able to be facilitated;

*‘...getting a rapport going so you know they can feel confident that you are there to support.’* (CDYOS Worker G)

*‘...I think at the hub of what we do, is relationship work...’* (CDYOS Worker B)

*‘...build that relationship, get a rapport going and if you haven’t got communication nowt’s gunner work.’* (CDYOS Worker F)

It was also commented on that there is a need to make sure the young person knows that it is the workers fault if they do not understand, not their own. It is up to the professional engaging with the young person to ensure that they can understand what is going on.

Linked very much to building rapport the notion of having to be able to adapt working styles of the CDYOS team to meet the individual need of the young people they are working with was very apparent throughout the interviews;

*‘...you tend to pitch it where you think the young person’s gunner get the most benefit from.’* (CDYOS Worker G)

*‘...when you’re speaking to people, you tailor – you look for body language and you look for signs that they understand what you’re saying and you tailor how you’re talking or whatever accordingly.’* (CDYOS Worker D)

The adaptation of working styles to encourage engagement with the young people was also commented on throughout the police interview;

*‘I’ve got my standard form that I work off what a youth caution is. And for all the points, I’ve sort of put in my own words and if somebody still doesn’t understand then I’ll always refer to this [youth caution word buster] anyway because it takes you through every point, one to twelve.’* (Police)

One respondent gave an example of working with a particular individual with identified speech and language needs where the normal 3 hour delivered session has had to be split into two with a gap in the middle due to the young person not being able to effectively engage for that length of time. Another example was provided of how a member of CDYOS staff had to adapt their style to ensure effective engagement of the young person, where it was stated that;

*'Well, I've got a young person at the moment who is very happy to talk in the third person and about other people but as soon as you start talking about himself, becomes very defensive, very closed and very angry and well, the rest of it. So I created a sheet for him, it was about-- The exercise was about his thoughts and feelings. Normally we have worksheets where he has to write about his thoughts and feelings. So instead of that, I did some big A3 sheets and pre-wrote some ideas on different colour post it and rated them so like I had an anger scale.'*  
(CDYOS Worker D)

Awareness of SLCN is the central theme running through all the interviews. It provides the bedrock from which individual and service development can occur, with the aim of ensuring better service delivery for young people with SLCN.

### Communication

Many of the comments in relation to the communication of specific terminology are related to changes which have been identified or have been the result of increased awareness of SLCN.

CDYOS workers reported having to act as an interpretation service when the young people they are working with are engaged with police or court settings:

*'...kind of aid communication cos the police still use a lot of jargon...'* (CDYOS Worker G)

*'...I go to court, I get it in the court language, I then translate it into English...and then I got to go and translate that for the young person'* (CDYOS Worker C)

The notion of ensuring the young person has understood what is being said was also commented on in the interview with the Police where it was stated that;

*‘...I’ve always asked along the way, do you understand? Is there anything I need to put in a different way?...’ (Police)*

*‘So I have to say, this is the official bit [charge notice]...I’ll read out a bit and then I’ll explain what it is...’ (Police)*

The need to be able to translate often technical terminology builds on the previously highlighted need for the CDYOS workers to build rapport with the young people they are working with. The fact that;

*‘If you can’t talk to that young person then the young person isn’t going to talk back...’ (CDYOS Worker A)*

The YJB advisor had a very overarching view of the criminal justice system. It was commented that confusion in relation to the terminology used within youth justice settings is not only confusing for individuals with SLCN, that it is confusing for most of the population.

The criminal justice system is a complex environment with complex terminology. Awareness of SLCN along with the relevant skills are needed by staff working with young people in this environment in order to ensure they are able to be effectively engaged.

### Resource

Resources commented on in the interviews included the professionally produced printed resources developed by CDYOS (Word buster cards, explaining technical terminology), personal resources (approaches developed by individuals) and the resources provided through having a SLT within the team at CDYOS. One mention was made of formal resources such as AssetPlus as helping to prompt questions regarding SLCN and to help identify any needs.

CDYOS management commented that they had received very positive feedback from staff in relation to the use and functionality of the printed resources (professionally produced and sold by the CDYOS). This was backed up by numerous complimentary comments by the CDYOS delivery team. In addition, they were stated to be important in

acting as a prompt to think about and include reference to SLCN in all work undertaken with young people. It was commented that;

*'You're not gunner forget to do something if is there in front of you...'* (CDYOS Worker G)

Word buster cards developed by the seconded SLT along with CDYOS were stated by a number of CDYOS staff as helping to improve how they were able to engage with young people. This was done through providing assistance in the translation of complex, often criminal justice related language. One CDYOS worker gave the example of using the cards to help explain what *'revoking the sentence'* (CDYOS Worker A) meant to a young person. A word which had been reported by the CDYOS member to have previously been used on a regular basis with young people, with little or no explanation. It was not known if young people had previously fully comprehended what the phrase related to. In addition, one respondent stated that they used the word buster themselves sometimes to ensure they really understood the terminology being used by their peers.

The YJB advisor was also very complimentary about the printed resources developed by CDYOS. It was felt that there is a very real need for these type of resources as terminology within criminal justice settings is complex and that;

*'...somebody would still have had to developed and had to change the complicated resources we in youth justice have...So even if there wasn't a speech and language issue there is still a need for speak easy, easy translatable tools and resources that help young people and staff of average intelligence. I think that the resources are beneficial to people like that'* (YJB Advisor)

Although the resources developed to aid communication were overall well received, it was commented by a couple of CDYOS workers that they needed to apply their own judgement as to when the resources were appropriate to use. There was a feeling that sometimes the resources could appear *'patronising'* (CDYOS Worker A) to some young people.

In addition to the printed resources which were described as being used, new approaches to working with the young people were also highlighted throughout the



interviews to have contributed to the growing supply of informal resource development. These included approaches such as drawing out complicated processes, such as court sentence escalation, ‘telling a story’ to highlight the important components of the Howard caution<sup>6</sup> and revising timetables given to the young people. Re-framing explanations to be able to account for individual need was seen as central in assisting young people to understand what was happening to them;

*‘I have to try and tell a little story, something the young person will understand.’*  
(CDYOS Worker G)

*‘I was with a young person and he had lots going on and I drew a picture on a bit of paper...of a skeleton, which he loved and I pulled a hole out and said that’s what’s inside your head and I did all these arrows showing things like his dad and he got that...’* (CDYOS Worker F).

Young people within the YOS have a timetable which details where they need to be at different times each day of the week. The timetable is therefore an important document and it is crucial that it is understood and adhered to. The seconded SLT was seen to act as a catalyst for staff to imagine and develop their own ideas with regards to incorporating SLCN related provision. For example, following a meeting with the SLT, a CDYOS worker made a number of changes to the timetable including the use of more simplified language and diagrams, in an effort to make it ‘...more speech and language friendly’ (CDYOS Worker E). The revised timetable was reported to be working well for the young people from initial verbal feedback provided.

Within a health context in CDYOS it was reported that pictorial resources are often used to help the young people explain what has happened. These resources have been around for a number of years and are reported to be used particularly in relation to sexual health. Other simple drawings were also reported to be used, including iceberg pictures;

*‘...what I see when I walk into a room and you’re kicking off is this bit, top of the iceberg, and this bit under the water is everything else that is going on in your life...’*  
(Health A)

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<sup>6</sup> Police caution read to all detained in police custody

A number of references were made to the seconded SLT within the CDYOS as being viewed as a resource. The fact that she was placed within the team attracted a number of positive comments and was seen to facilitate informal information sharing practices to allow for continuous learning and awareness raising of SLCN. Sitting physically within the team, the SLT was reported to have been able to pick up the nuances of the CDYOS and how they deliver their services. It was reported that it is important for the SLT to be based within the team in order to be part of the team and not seen as an outsider who doesn't understand the contextual situation of the CDYOS. In addition, it was felt strongly by the management within CDYOS that *'...you want them in a YOS because that's where the issues are...'* (CDYOS management A).

Another CDYOS worker highlighted the importance of having an SLT being embedded within the team meant that she could be contacted informally and frequently resulting in a reduced need for more formal training; *'Susan is there say or you could try this approach or this approach. So if she wasn't here, I think I'd probably need more training.'* (CDYOS worker D).

The accrued benefits of having a multi-disciplinary team within a single location were also commented upon favourably;

*'...you can tackle problems from different angles within a brief conversation...unscheduled moments...I've got this kid I just can't get...somebody else chips in and before you know it, you've got a different perspective on the issue...'* (CDYOS Worker B)

As well as the specialist knowledge of SLCN, the seconded SLT also had a number of comments made about her personality. The seconded SLT's positive and engaging mannerisms were commented on throughout a number of the interviews where she was described as being *'approachable'* (CDYOS Worker A) and *'enthusiastic'* (CDYOS Worker B). These mannerisms did lead however to a couple of respondents querying if it is the SLT's personality and 'presence' within the service, or the importance of the topic which is making her so involved within the service.

Physical printed resources developed by the seconded SLT in conjunction with CDYOS have been developed and are seen to assist with the communication between professionals and young people by breaking down communication barriers. In addition, having an increased awareness of SLCN a number of CDYOS staff have commented on making their own resources, adapting previous working practices in order to become more communication friendly. Again this sees the SLT acting as a catalyst prompting staff to initiate and develop their own ideas regarding SLCN related provision. Having the SLT within the CDYOS is arguably the most utilised resource, both in a formal format of delivering training, developing resources and working with young people, and through informal formats such as office chat, asking questions because she is physically there.

#### Service delivery

There is a strong culture of innovation and creativity within CDYOS which is seen to assist in prompting and promoting service change. Strong links within the team at CDYOS were highlighted as a facilitator to lead change within the service following the increased profile of SLCN within the service. It was suggested by a number of CDYOS workers that the team were able to feed ideas up to management to identify areas for improvement or areas where initiatives were working well. This strong staff cohesion was seen to promote sense of worth within the team to influence change.

The seconded SLT commented that the dynamic and supportive management structure within the CDYOS has created the right service level environment to facilitate change.

It was apparent through all the interviews with CDYOS staff that they were passionate about their work with young people. It was highlighted that;

*‘...the tenacity of many of our staff in terms of dealing with other agencies and in terms of doing all they can to force the issue one way or the other to get their kid the help that that person needs in my opinion, has been second to none. People will go and do great things to get what they think their young person needs.’*  
(CDYOS Worker B).

In addition, it was commented by the seconded SLT that CDYOS staff are viewed as keen and want to do the right thing for the young people they work with and therefore have adapted to changes and made the service more communication friendly as a result.

Having the SLT post within the CDYOS was commented to have made the referral process for specialist input ‘...a lot quicker’ and ‘...more straightforward’ (CDYOS Worker A). It was reported that previously, ‘...we could be waiting weeks...’ (Health A).

The service delivery within the CDYOS is heavily influenced by the management team. Innovation and creativity endorsed by this team have facilitated and nurtured changes in practices moving the service to become more communication friendly.

#### Staff mix

The fact that the CDYOS is a multi-disciplinary team made up of professionals from a range of backgrounds was commented on throughout the interviews. References in relation to this were often very positive with respondents commenting about complimentary skill sets within the team as well as strong links between team members. It was interesting however to note that staff are viewed to retain ownership to their specialist profession even though they sit under the umbrella of the CDYOS. One respondent provided an anecdote of the differences observed;

*‘...I was sitting next to ...a CAMHS nurse, ...and a social work trained probation officer, just listening to how they conduct conversations. How they answer the phone was illuminating because their vocabulary, how they spoke about similar problems to other professionals on the phone just demonstrated that they were quite different. One was obviously from health, the other...social work...’* (CDYOS Worker B).

The seconded SLT reported to have linked in and worked with staff within a number of roles wider than the CDYOS. These roles included education, CAMHS, youth workers, social workers. It was stated that links are made on a case by case basis at present dependent on the individual young person’s needs and that all links seen as opportunities to raise awareness of SLCN as well as improve outcomes for the young person.

Linked very closely to the working practices within CDYOS the staff mix reflects the broad range of disciplines evident within the team that help to ensure a holistic approach to working with young people.

### System

It was highlighted that SLCN ‘...hasn’t come on overnight...’ (CDYOS Worker A), even though referral figures may indicate this. It was stated that 18 months ago staff were not aware of SLCN and therefore it wasn’t picked up. This was suggested to possibly mirror other services who have previously engaged with the same young people that have ‘missed’ identifying need. It was suggested that potentially due to the structured approach to SLCN now seen across the CDYOS, that there are more young people with SLCN being picked up. CDYOS management reinforced these ideas. They provided the example that 53 young people had received a specialist assessment during their last reporting period. During the previous ten years they stated there had been 5. The reasoning for the increase was suggested to be related to the fact that staff now knew what they were looking for. As a result of the training received staff were now more aware of SLCN and could therefore identify if a young person had an SLCN;

*‘...there’s much greater awareness, identification of massive complex needs...those issues should have been picked up much earlier. Of those 53...49 had never had any speech and language involvement at all...despite the fact their problems were really entrenched...’* (CDYOS Management A)

The notion of increased awareness leading to more referrals was also said to be true for the increased use of intermediaries<sup>7</sup>. CDYOS management provided anecdotal evidence that Durham has a much higher use of intermediaries than other areas and that this is thought to be because, like SLCN, staff now have awareness of when an intermediary should be involved.

Although work in relation to raising awareness of and incorporating SLCN related initiative is predominately happening within the CDYOS, effects of this work are stated

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<sup>7</sup> An intermediary is a communication specialist, to help a witness or defendant understand the court process and give their best evidence (Youth Justice Legal Centre, 2014)

by CDYOS management to be far wider reaching. Initiatives related to SLCN provision are shared by the CDYOS through a variety of local and regional meetings where information is being taken back and used to inform practices in other organisations and departments, including the wider children's services within Durham County Council, other YOS's, police, court and healthcare providers. It was suggested that the impact of incorporating SLCN provision within the heart of CDYOS is creating a '*Seismic shift in ways of thinking...*' (CDYOS management A).

However, the structure of the criminal justice service was suggested to hinder identification of SLCN. Examples were given that the system is '*alien*' to many of the young people engaging in it (CDYOS Worker A). It was commented that the system is new to a lot of young people and they don't know how they should be interacting within it. They are generally frightened, especially if it is their first encounter with criminal justice and this may affect their behaviour. In addition, the criminal justice system was stated to not always be straight forward and young people are not always felt to understand what is going on and happening to them. Sometimes therefore it was suggested that they will agree to things so that they don't '*look stupid*' (CDYOS Worker G);

*'He's gunner say yes, but he ain't gunner understand it cos he doesn't want to look a divvy or incompetent...'* (CDYOS Worker G)

The SLT core service leads highlighted that there is a need for all professionals working with young people to have knowledge of SLCN;

*'...there's a role for anybody that's involved with a child or young person to support them within the skill level that they have...a role for any professional to support their [young person's] development'* (SLCN B)

All staff working with young people are said to need to be informed and trained as a workforce in relation to the impact of a speech and communication difficulty, in order that they can;

*'...interact and help that person access services and deal with whatever as part of that service'* (SLCN C)

It was commented that there is a different approach between core SLCN services and those SLCN services seen to be provided within CDYOS in terms of operational procedures. The tight timescales seen within CDYOS do not translate to core services. Within CDYOS there are opportunities to prioritise for early assessment in order that needs are identified before key dates, such as a court appearance for example. Whilst in core services this does not happen. It was felt by the SLT core service leads that being embedded within the CDYOS environment will ensure that the SLT is much more aware of the environment and the processes imposed on the young people and therefore better equipped to make contextually informed decisions.

The recent increase in referrals paints an unfair picture of the level of historic need of SLCN in YOS's. It is argued that with increased awareness of SLCN has come the knowledge of what to look for, and thus increased the number of referrals. The system as a result is needing to change previous working practices in order to meet the newly identified needs of young people who offend.

#### Working practices in CDYOS

Working practices have developed and evolved within CDYOS. However, the CDYOS management team feel that there should be a national steer on how SLCN is addressed not only within YOS's but across children's services in local authorities. AssetPlus is thought to be the first step towards the acknowledgement of the importance of considering SLCN within service delivery. It is a national tool used to screen all young people entering YOS. However, the CDYOS management team stated that the tool is '*...only as good as the staff using it.*' (CDYOS management B). It is felt that if there is insufficient training staff will not know what they are looking for and as such needs will be missed. In addition, there needs to be pathways developed for those young people identified as having need(s). In CDYOS there is a SLT but it was commented that not all YOS's will have this provision as is it not mandatory and that pathways into community-based services often take too long and are not based on a model known to engage young people who offend (assertive outreach model).

The AssetPlus screening tool was reported by the health professional within CDYOS to be their starting point for assessing young people and therefore it is important that all screening questions have been completed correctly.

Bringing in additional resource in relation to SLCN provision, into the CDYOS, namely that of the seconded SLT post has meant that *'pinch points'* (CDYOS management B) within the system could be identified. These were points at which interventions could be brought in to ensure the service was communication friendly. Previous to bringing in the SLT, the CDYOS team were stated to have not thought about these.

It was commented that having SLCN provision within CDYOS is crucial in ensuring that young people are able to understand what is going on and to effectively engage with the service.

*'...if young people are going to understand what they've done, the implications and the consequences of that and understand the kind of legal restrictions that might be placed on them if they're to abide by that they need to understand them and also be able to provide their version of events' (SLT)*

Identification of the impact having SLCN provision can have within the CDYOS, namely a fairer more equitable service for all young people, brought thoughts by the CDYOS management of the transferability of the approach across the wider children's services in Durham County Council. To this effect, CDYOS are working with the public health team within Durham County Council on a full health needs assessment for young people in County Durham. In addition, it was comment upon by the YJB Advisor that there is a need for SLCN to be addressed across services and for resources such as those being developed and used within CDYOS to be available in learning disabilities and vulnerable adults' teams for example.

It was stated that other YOS's have included SLCN related provision. However, there is a feeling that this hasn't been done to the same extent of that seen in Durham, i.e. creating resources and putting it at the heart of development. Within CDYOS the management team have seen how the staff have reacted to the inclusion of SLCN provision. It is felt that the staff 'have owned it' (CDYOS management B). Practices have



been seen to be changed and it has impacted on staff growth and development within the service. In addition, the fact that SLT is physically located within the service is thought to help give it the impact it has had.

Working practices were commented to have had to change over the past few years as the criminal justice landscape is very different to that of the time when the Crime and Disorder Act was written. CDYOS management highlighted how YOS's in general have been very successful on diversion and therefore the young people left in the system are much more complex than they were 10 years ago. Therefore, services have to change to meet these needs. It is also thought that YOS's now have a much better understanding of need than they did 10 years ago.

It was felt that there is a need to stop talking about and referring to SLCN within a medical model. Although it was acknowledged by CDYOS management that it is essentially medical input (sitting within and governed by the NHS) there is a strong social side to it and it is this that needs to be emphasised, in order to understand the impact SLCN can make within a YOS setting. Using the existing community based medical model where letters are sent out, appointments made at health care settings it was stated that young people seen by the YOS would '...miss out again' (CDYOS management A) as this approach does not work for the cohort of young people engaging with YOS.

*'...not here's an appointment in a clinical setting where if you don't turn up you're just discharged...' need to '...go and turn up at their houses with a YOS case manager if need be to get through the door. Sher's texting them [young people], she's ringing them [young people], hope you haven't forgotten I'm coming round today...doing what she needs to do to make it happen.'* (CDYOS management B).

Indeed, it was commented by the seconded SLT that she had previously worked with young people but had not worked with those coming into contact with the YOS, reinforcing the point that the complex young people the CDYOS works with often miss out on community-based services.

There was only one respondent (CDYOS worker) that questioned whether it should be the CDYOS that is responsible for providing speech, language and communication

related initiatives. It was stated that although amendments to service delivery could be made within CDYOS to facilitate SLCN, ultimately, the CDYOS is not a panacea and appropriate professionals within health services need to be brought in to meet their needs. In contradiction to this, another CDYOS worker noted that perhaps, because the CDYOS is multi-disciplinary, it should be viewed as a catch-all for providing any services young people engaging in the service require.

The YJB Advisor stated that it should not be down to the CDYOS to have to undertake interventions and have a SLT within the service to address SLCN. However;

*'...they're [CDYOS] doing it [addressing SLCN issues] because nobody else has or because children have moved up and either it didn't happen when they were young enough or they've learnt coping mechanisms to hide it.'* (YJB Advisor)

The seconded SLT highlighted what she felt was the key role for staff within CDYOS in relation to SLCN related provision;

*'With AssetPlus they have to screen every young person for SLCN...so it's a screening role then they need to be able to refer on to get specialist knowledge and help...then their role is about adapting their own practice to ensure that they make reasonable adjustments and link in partnership work with what I'm doing so that the two complement each other'* (SLT A)

Capacity issues were highlighted by both the CDYOS management and the seconded SLT in relation to the number of young people that would benefit from seeing her. However, it was commented that SLCN therapy does not always need to be undertaken by a SLT. An example of how SLT's work with schools was provided as an example of a possible way for the CDOS to operate;

*'The way we work with schools is a lot of the work is passed to another professional...typically at schools it might be work around vocabulary understanding. So schools, it would be their duty of care to ensure the words used in lessons are accessible and understood for young people...My role is to educate and support other staff in how they facilitate that process'* (SLT A)

Working practices within CDYOS have changed dramatically with the introduction of the seconded SLT. However, there is still a need for a national steer in order to elevate the

importance of having a communication friendly service and to ensure more comparable practices across YOS's. Questions remain about the role for YOS's in delivering SLCN related initiatives. However, there is a strong sense by the majority of respondents that it is within CDYOS's remit to both acknowledge SLCN in young people and to provide relevant support in order to ensure effective engagement of young people within the service. However, the YJB respondent and one of the CDYOS workers queried this perspective suggesting instead that it was outside of the remit of the CDYOS.

### ***Young people in CDYOS interviews***

Four interviews were conducted with young people who were currently engaged with CDYOS. Six young people had originally been recruited to participate, however, due to factors outside the Researcher's control (relocation of a young person and one deemed not appropriate to be interviewed by his CDYOS caseworker due to personal reasons).

All of the interviewees were identified to have a speech, language and/or communication need. However, needs were not deemed sufficiently acute to require specialist input from the SLT. Chapter 6 details how respondents were identified and recruited.

The main aim of the interviews was to ascertain if communication issues have been perceived to create barriers to engagement with the CDYOS. In addition, discussions were had in relation to how these barriers could be overcome. Interviews took a semi-structured approach. The interview schedule was devised by the researcher with input from the SLT in CDYOS to ensure that questions asked were appropriate in terms of language used and would be able to be understood by the young people recruited to take part. The interviews lasted around 15 minutes. See appendix H for a copy of the interview schedule. 3 of the interviews were recorded and transcribed, 1 respondent refused to be recorded and so notes were taken during the interview.

Engagement with the young people both in recruitment for and during the interview was problematic. Many of the young people approached by their caseworkers to participate

in the interviews refused as it was not mandatory. This led to a very small respondent sample size. During the interview itself, all of the young people were difficult to engage with in relation to prompting them to answer questions with more than one word or to understand why they had given the answer that they had. This was not unexpected as all respondents had been identified as having some level of SLCN. However, even with guidance provided to the researcher by the SLT prior to the interviews, very little information was able to be extracted from the interviews. In addition, one of the respondents was due in court the day after the interview and was very preoccupied with this and was reluctant to participate.

Due to the small sample size and limited data captured from the interviews. A very broad thematic analysis approach was used. All interviews were transcribed and compared by the researcher to identify core emerging themes.

### **Sample**

Demographic, criminal justice and SLC needs (as identified by the CDYOS caseworker) for the four interview respondents is detailed in table 18 below.

*Table 18: Demographic information for interview respondents*

	<b>Respondent A</b>	<b>Respondent B</b>	<b>Respondent C</b>	<b>Respondent D</b>
Gender	Female	Male	Male	Male
Age	17	15	16	17
Total number of times had been engaged with CDYOS	3	11	7	2
Current reason(s) for	Youth Rehabilitation Order	Youth Rehabilitation Order + 2	Youth Rehabilitation Order + 1	Youth Rehabilitation Order

engagement with CDYOS		activity programmes	activity programme	
Previous reason for engagement with CDYOS	1 x Pre court disposal 1 x Youth conditional caution	1 x Pre court disposal 1 x Youth caution 2 x Youth conditional caution 1 x referral order programme 2 x Youth rehabilitation order	1 x Pre court disposal 1 x Youth conditional caution 1 x Referral order programme 2 x Youth rehabilitation order	1 x Youth referral order programme
SLCN identified	Has difficulty thinking of words wants to say Has speech which is difficult to understand Has difficulty in remembering things people say Appears frustrated with no obvious cause	Is socially awkward and inappropriate Appears frustrated with no obvious cause Has difficulty in thinking about the thoughts/ feelings of others	Has difficulty in thinking about the thoughts/ feelings of others	Has difficulty thinking of words wants to say Only uses simple vocabulary Has difficulty explaining things Has difficulty in understanding meaning of words Has difficulty in thinking about the thoughts/ feelings of others

### **Findings**

Although only a very small number of interviews were conducted, a core theme regarding the relationship between worker and young person was very apparent throughout the interviews. It was evident that the young people rely on their worker to pass on

information to them about their required engagement with CDYOS and to instruct them as to what they have to do. This transfer of information from worker to young person was always mainly verbal. When paperwork was required to be completed, workers were reported to talk through what needed to be done. A couple of the respondents highlighted that they did not always understand what was being told to them by their worker, especially in relation to more complex criminal justice language and process. Workers were commented by 3 of the respondents to work with the young people and repeat or break down their language so that it could be better understood.

*'If I don't understand a word, he'll [worker] break it down and tell me what it is'*  
(Respondent B)

One respondent reported that they did not understand criminal justice related '*jargon*' stating it was too difficult to understand and that nothing could be done to improve it. When asked about what could be done to improve communication between respondents and the workers within CDYOS three of the respondents replied with nothing or that they didn't know. Given the SLCN that the respondents presented with (see table 14) it cannot be said with certainty if perhaps they did not understand the questions being asked throughout the interview or found it difficult to articulate their thoughts. It may have also been a methodological issue whereby more time was needed in order for a more trusting relationship could be developed between the researcher and young person.

The key finding coming from the limited data taken from the interviews with young people is the importance placed on the relationship between worker and young person. All respondents were very focused on how the engagement with their CDYOS worker(s) and how this bond in turn affected their engagement with the CDYOS.

## **8.4 Conclusion**

The literature presented within chapters two - four with regards to the need for SLCN related provision is echoed by locally derived data, suggesting that there is a place, and need for SLCN related provision at the local (CDYOS) level.

Within the findings aiming to identify what SLCN related provision should look like, awareness of SLCN was a central theme running through the findings in response to question one. Within the literature it was acknowledged that a lack of awareness about the impact of SLCN in terms of understanding spoken and written instructions by justice professionals can jeopardise a young person's chances of compliance with criminal justice processes, resulting in misunderstandings which may lead to further experiences of failure for the young person (RCSLT, 2012). It is of no surprise therefore, that most of the SLT's within YOS settings who participated in the research commented on delivering awareness raising training of some description into the YOS they were working with. Awareness raising was also highlighted throughout the interviews whereby many comments were made regarding the increased awareness and associated knowledge about SLCN had led to a more rounded understanding about how to ensure engagement with all young people and had prompted a number of behaviour changes with staff. In addition, the feedback forms also supported the importance of awareness raising where it was found that professionals surrounding young people with SLCN need to have an awareness of the issues SLCN can have in order to ensure effective engagement with the service.

The significance placed on awareness is important to consider in the context of a service delivery model as it has implications for staff development and context of the service. In addition, it will also impact on practical applications of service delivery such as ensuring individual care plans for the young people are developed, rather than attempting to engage young people in universal interventions that may not take specific needs into account (Hughes et al., 2012).

Linked in part to awareness raising, communication was also seen as an emerging theme. The criminal justice system is a complex environment with complex terminology. Professionals need to be able to effectively engage and communicate with young people if they are to be successfully engaged with the service. This links back to the potential for professionals to jeopardise a young person's chances of compliance with criminal justice processes by not being able to effectively communicate information to them

(RCSLT, 2012). Indeed, through the interviews with young people it became apparent that they rely on their worker(s) to pass on information to them about their required engagement with CDYOS and to instruct them as to what they have to do.

As part of the communication process a number of SLT's throughout the YOS's participating in the research comment on the fact they had developed resources (including written and visual) to assist communication between young people and professionals. This is again an important consideration for the service delivery model, as it identifies links to service delivery in terms of required staff development activities to improve engagement with young people.

The multi-disciplinary context of the YOS appears to facilitate the incorporation of new initiatives from areas outside of the 'typical' criminal justice arena. YOS's have had educational and health professionals within the team for a number of years. The inclusion of a SLT and the development of SLCN related provision has therefore been relatively straightforward with little objection from within the local delivery team (CDYOS). Complimenting this approach, is a focus within the service on individual need whereby the varied components of need can be addressed by the numerous professionals making up the YOS. This approach influences service delivery models. If the mechanisms used by criminal justice services to deliver interventions are not reframed to take into account an individuals need, or if interventions/services to assist with specific SLCN are not provided for young people with identified needs, there is a significant risk of the young person not being able to fully engage in the criminal justice processes which can then impact upon, and lead to repetition of offences and non-compliance with orders (Bercow, 2008). Service configuration in relation to staff/skill mix is therefore an important component of service model delivery design.

This chapter has looked to provide an overview of the findings from question one. The next chapter builds on these findings through providing a more in-depth discussion of the results and comparisons with literature in order to identify and develop programme theories in relation to the generative mechanisms in play when incorporating SLCN



provision within a YOS setting. In addition, Chapter nine also details the development of the service delivery model which is used to inform question two.

## **9. Question 1 Discussion: Building of the programme theories and service delivery model**

### **9.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter detailed the findings from question one and highlighted the importance given to the delivery of services whilst understanding and raising awareness of SLCN issues. In this respect, the practices of the staff within the CDYOS were seen to normalise behaviour connected to ensuring SLCN related provision was threaded through the service delivery and had become embedded within the team.

This chapter will bring together the data captured within chapter eight by developing initial programme theories and a service delivery model from the findings.

As highlighted within chapter six, normalisation process theory (NPT), is used to guide the analysis of the findings in order to generate implications and recommendations about how to develop SLCN related provision within a YOS setting through the use of programme theories. NPT has been chosen to guide this analysis as successful implementation and embedding of new practices such as SLCN provision within a YOS setting, relies on co-ordinated, collective behaviour of individuals working within the constraints of the YOS context. NPT provides a theory of implementation that emphasises collective action in explaining and shaping, the embedding of new practices (May et al, 2018). It therefore links to both evidencing the need of SLCN related provision and the development of a service delivery model.

Following the discussion of the results, overarching programme theories are postulated to highlight the key context, mechanism, outcome configurations that facilitate SLCN related provision within a YOS context.

The chapter then concludes with a proposed service delivery model incorporating the identified key programme theories. This model is then used as the basis for question two of the research, explored in chapters ten - twelve.

## 9.2 Programme theory development

As discussed in Chapter five, interventions operate through introducing new ideas and/or resources into existing social relationships thus creating mechanisms for change by modifying capacities, resources, constraints and choices for both participants and practitioners (Judge, 2000). Realist approaches attend to the ways that interventions may have different effects for different people, by trying to understand configurations of contexts, mechanisms and outcomes; the formulae Context + Mechanism = Outcome (C+M=O) is used to express this. Mechanisms relate to the combination of resources offered by an intervention and the reasoning that these are able to enhance in a particular context and lead to measurable or observable outcomes (Dalkin et al, 2015). The term outcome can mean different things in different evaluation scenarios. Wong et al (2016 p8) give example definitions of the term as referring to 'patterns of implementation', or 'patterns of efficiency or 'cost effectiveness for different populations', in addition to outcomes and impacts in the normal uses of the term. Context may be locational (i.e. spatial, geographical) institutional and/or social, (i.e. norms, values, rules inter-relationships) (Judge, 2000).

Programme theories are the ideas and assumptions underlying how, why and in what circumstances complex social interventions work and are the units of analysis used within realist evaluation (Best et al, 2012, Gee, 2016). These theories state how the intervention leads to which effect, and in which conditions.

The overarching programme theory (as described in Chapter 5) guiding the research is:

*If provisions are put in place (mechanism I) in the context of the YOS (context) to address SLCN through adapted provision (mechanism II) then young people with*

*SLCN will be able to engage more effectively (mechanism III) with the YOS, and therefore receive greater benefit in participating in the interventions designed for them by the YOS (outcome I) and thus impact on the prevalence of re-offending rates (outcome II)*

### **9.3 Discussion of findings**

This section explores the findings as presented in Chapter eight alongside theoretical underpinnings from NPT. This section is structured around the three emerging key themes from the findings; Awareness of SLCN; Communication within a complex environment; and Multi-disciplinary contextual considerations. Programme theories are developed and included within the discussion below.

Although question one set out to understand what a YOS SLCN service model should look like, the apparent normalisation of the practice already starting to be seen within the CDYOS has led the research to take more of an unintended evaluative stance on the current practices (as highlighted in Chapter one). Thus, question one has focused on identifying what aspects of SLCN related provision within CDYOS are working well, and therefore what should be contained within a service delivery model. The use of NPT therefore in the discussion of the findings and development of a service delivery model promotes the identification of generative mechanisms allowing for the implementation of SLCN provision within the YOS setting.

#### ***Awareness of SLCN***

Awareness of SLCN by both professionals and wider stakeholders was the central theme running through the findings, with one interview respondent summarising;

*‘...if your eyes are open your more likely to see, to identify and pick up.’ (CDYOS Worker G)*

The notion that if you don't know what something is, you don't see it, came through a number of the interviews and was backed up by results from the call for information and SLT feedback forms. The simple act of being made aware was suggested to prompt a behaviour change in a way that mitigates the problem.

SLCN is not a new concept, however it's relatively recent emergent prominence within YOS settings through national level reports such as the Bercow review (2008) and subsequent policy led changes such as the Children and Families Act (2014), gives the perception that it is. This rapid rise to the foreground has resulted in a need for professionals working in connection with YOS's to develop an awareness of what SLCN is, what impacts it has, and how provision of services should be modified to accommodate emerging need. This need for knowledge was seen within the findings through the development and delivery of specific SLCN awareness raising training delivered by SLT's both in CDYOS and in a number of other areas where SLT's were working. This need for information links to the notion that staff need to make sense of what is going on through increasing their awareness of SLCN in order to allow for and make necessary provisions for young people with SLCN they may be working with. The differentiation concept of NPT highlights how a key element of 'making sense' is understanding how a set of practices can be different from each other. In this respect, increasing awareness of SLCN raises issues of how practices can be modified to ensure they are 'communication friendly' resulting in young people engaged with having a better chance of understanding what is expected of them. Developing awareness and a more detailed understanding of SLCN was also seen to contribute to staff feeling more confident in their work. Awareness raising training can therefore be suggested to improve service delivery by being able to better identify need, to meet said need and reduce non-intentional discrimination.

Following general awareness raising to 'make sense' of SLCN and its impacts, there needs to also be some form of communal specification, as described by NPT in order to normalise the processes it relates to within the service delivery. That is, an understanding of the specific tasks and responsibilities required by the staff to meet the identified needs. A number of training sessions along with specially developed resources were

commented on during the interviews with stakeholders, and through the call for evidence as methods through which information about how practices, such as engagement with young people should be undertaken. These activities were seen to equip stakeholders with knowledge of what they needed to do to ensure SLCN were identified and addressed. A key example of this was the development of printed resources within CDYOS. Word buster cards which explain technical terminology in plain English and pictures were viewed by many within CDYOS as prompting successful engagement with young people. The cards acted as a prompt to ensure that the terminology used by the member of staff was pitched at the correct level, as well as assisting with ensuring all information that needed to be conveyed, even if it is normally complex to describe, was communicated to the young person. These resources however could not simply be given to staff with a standardised implementation across the team. There was seen to be a need for individual staff to understand the resource and reflect on the individual situational context with each young person working with in order to determine if the assistance of the word buster cards was necessary, and if so how they should be used. This therefore meant the staff had to engage in individual appraisal (part of the reflexive monitoring NPT construct), working experientially to appraise the effects of the resources in the contexts in which they are acting in order to determine their effectiveness.

Another NPT construct which awareness relates to, is cognitive participation. This is the work that people do to build and sustain a community of practice around SLCN provision within YOS settings. Central to this concept is the question of 'who does the work?' Within this construct initiation refers to the work done to drive forward the initiative, in this case raising awareness of SLCN. Within the call for evidence all areas stated that they developed strategies and methods of engagement of young people with SLCN for the staff in the YOS. SLT's were viewed as a specialist resource, being able not only to provide clinical interventions to those young people who needed SLT intervention, but also as a more generic resource able to influence the broader operation of the service, through provision of staff training for example. In this respect the placing of an SLT within a YOS delivery team was seen to act as a catalyst for change (Multi-disciplinary contextual considerations section explores this idea in more detail).

Providing ownership of the behaviours needed to be enacted following training delivered falls under the concept of legitimisation within the cognitive participation concept of NPT. Through awareness training, staff were able to reflect on their own practices in order to assess if there were better ways of engaging the young people they work with. In addition, it was commented that participating in training gave people the 'tools' they needed to respond to the situations they found themselves in with the young people worked with. These tools primarily related to cognitive techniques such as engagement strategies, understanding correct terminology to be used and being able to identify potential barriers a young person may be facing in relation to their engagement.

If there is to be SLCN related provision within YOS's there must first be awareness raising. Stakeholders connected to the service need to know what SLCN is and how it can impact on a young person's engagement with the service in order to ensure any potential barriers to engagement are addressed. Through developing an understanding of how these practices may be different to pre-existing practices, understanding what tasks and responsibilities require ownership and how the work can be driven forward will assist in the actions stemming from this to become embedded in the 'normal' service delivery of the YOS.

Following the analysis above programme theory one states that;

*Understanding of what SLCN related provision should look like (mechanism; reasoning), through increased awareness raising about SLCN (mechanism; resource) within the context of the CDYOS (context) will lead to embedded practice changes within the service (outcome I) which allow for more effective engagement with young people with SLCN (outcome II)*

### ***Communication within a complex environment***

As described within the background the CDYOS in Chapter one, and elaborated on in Chapter five and six, the CDYOS can be viewed as a complex system. Indeed, the whole criminal justice system is a complex environment coupled with complex terminology. To

this effect, the CDYOS does not act in isolation, it has numerous compounding influences. For example, the young people engaging with the service are often also engaging with a number of other services, including, Police, Social Services, health services and educational establishments for instance. Staff within the CDYOS working with the young people therefore must understand what their role is in respect to supporting the young person, and how it connects with other services or support surrounding the young person. This translates to the individual component of Coherence within NPT whereby it is stated that people need to understand their specific tasks and responsibilities around a set of practices. Staff need to understand their role within the complex nature of the YOS setting and how it relates to supporting the young person in order to be able to normalise and embed working practices. The needs of the young person are already seen as being the core construct informing staff behaviour, this therefore builds on this already embedded notion, introducing the concept of meeting and addressing additional needs of SLCN within the service delivered.

Communication both between the YOS and the young person, and between the YOS and other services is viewed as being paramount in order to ensure the young person's needs (in relation to SLCN and any other identified needs) are being met. If the young people are going to be effectively engaged with then they need to be able to understand and comprehend what is going on and what is expected of them. In addition, they need to be able to actively engage in processes. This is seen to often require assistance as the RCSLT (2012) highlight how GCSE English level A-C is required to access education and treatment programmes (Davis 2004). However around one third of offenders have speaking and listening skills below level 1 (equivalent to age eleven) of the National Framework (Davies et al, 2004) and are therefore unable to access these programmes due to poor language and literacy skills. It was commented on within the interviews, that often the CDYOS is seen to act as an interpretation service for the young person with an example provided of a court setting;

*'...I go to court, I get it in the court language, I then translate it into English...and then I got to go and translate that for the young person' (CDYOS Worker C)*



The need to be 'many things' in terms of supporting a young person relates to the notion of contextual integration within NPT. Staff need to be able to manage a set of practices by allocating different resources and the execution of protocols, policies and procedures (May et al., 2018) dependent on the context they are in. Due to its multi-disciplinary approach, the CDYOS, and indeed all YOS's have a holistic view to supporting young people within their service, aiming to meet and support a broad range of needs (see section Multi-disciplinary contextual considerations for further discussion). Practices undertaken by CDYOS staff need to be able to adapt to the changing contextual environment they find themselves in, however remain central to the concept of having the young person's needs at the centre of the service delivered. This notion of contextual integration was also evident as a directive from the management within CDYOS. There was strong support and 'buy-in' from the management of CDYOS in relation to embedding SLCN provision within the service. The management team had commissioned the SLT to be seconded into the team at a time when little was known and appreciated at the local level in terms of the need for such provision. The management team were therefore viewed by staff within the CDYOS and within the community SLT service as being very proactive and forward thinking. This was especially in relation to the work asked of the SLT, building knowledge and capacity within the staff delivery team at CDYOS in order that SLCN provision could be threaded throughout the service and that it did not solely consist of clinical interventions as often seen within the community. This approach had the impact of gaining respect from CDYOS and wider stakeholders, including the YJB, in terms of valuing the work of the CDYOS in respect of addressing SLCN related issues within the service.

An important element of the SLCN related provision within CDYOS was stated to be the identification of 'pinch points' within the system. These were points within the youth criminal justice system directly linked to CDYOS whereby interventions could be brought in to ensure that the service delivered was 'communication friendly' and thus increase levels of engagement with young people. This implementing of interventions at pinch points reflects reconfiguration within NPT whereby staff either at an individual or collective level redefine or modify practices through appraisal of current practices. Again, although the interventions were service wide, focusing on ensuring the service was

‘communication friendly’ these interventions very much had the individual needs of the young person threaded through them. It was commented how young people needed to be able to understand what was going on to them and around them if they were to understand the consequences and implications of their actions and the subsequent legal restrictions that have or may be placed upon them.

Following the analysis above programme theory two states that;

*Ensuring that the CDYOS is ‘communication friendly’ service (mechanism; resource) within a complex criminal justice context, young people engaging with the service are more likely to understand and comprehend what is going on (mechanism; reasoning) and can therefore engage more effectively with the service (outcome).*

### ***Multi-disciplinary contextual considerations***

The CDYOS is typified by its strong culture of creativity and innovation. This is viewed in part to be due to a flexible co-construction approach to service development, whereby boundaries between staff specialisms (i.e. SLT, education, social work, health) became blurred in the development and implementation of SLCN related provision. In addition, strong staff cohesion was observed within the CDYOS with staff all working to a common aim of improving service provision for the young people engaged with. This cohesion facilitated a sense of worth with individuals within the team in being able to influence change. This links to the concept of communal specification within NPT where sense-making relies on people working together to build a shared understanding of the aims, objectives, and expected benefits of a set of practices.

Further to the role of the staff delivery team within the service, strong, supportive and dynamic management within CDYOS was also viewed as having a central role in facilitating a culture of creativity and innovation. The management team enabled and drove forward innovative practices with enthusiasm, which was then filtered down to the remaining staff endorsing a sense of purpose and ownership of the new direction and practices.

CDYOS is not alone in having implemented SLCN provision within a YOS setting. Although the placement of a SLT within the YOS is not mandated, the guiding national documentation and reviews have clearly sparked discussion and debate within YOS's as to what should be included and delivered within the team. Due to the historical multi-disciplinary nature of the YOS, having a specialist SLT seconded within the team is not a radically new approach and follows previous incorporation of other health professionals (i.e. nurses) within the service. Being physically based within the team has fostered a co-creation approach to services whereby staff specialisms and existing knowledge are brought together to influence the service delivery. This links to the concept of skill set workability within NPT. Work is allocated within the team which underpins the division of labour built up around a set of practices as they are operationalised in the real world. This division of labour in reflecting the individual specialisms and knowledge base of staff helps to assist with the acceptance of, and subsequent normalisation of practices.

The importance of the multi-disciplinary context of the team within CDYOS was a key feature in ensuring a cohesive holistic approach to service delivery. Specialist professions, such as education, nurse, SLT for example were able to maintain their specialist status whilst also contributing to the delivery of the service as a whole. This relates to the concept of enrolment where staff were seen to organise and reorganise themselves in order to collectively contribute to the work involved in new practices (May et al., 2018). Unsurprisingly given the context of the research, the SLT was referred to the most in terms of being instrumental (along with the direction of the management team as commented above) in prompting service level changes within the CDYOS. This role essentially provided a catalyst for change. It is difficult to ascertain how much of this was influenced by the clinical knowledge and expertise brought by the post holder to the service and how much was related to their personality. The SLT brought a wealth of knowledge regarding SLCN to the CDYOS and led on a number of initiatives to raise awareness within the team through working closely with the delivery staff team in order to understand and tailor the training to the current context of the CDYOS. The SLT was referred to as being very approachable and willing to assist with any element of query in relation to SLCN. The SLT post holder was viewed to take the time to get to know the

team and suggest and introduce changes gradually alongside existing staff members which assisted with the uptake of new practices by staff.

Following the analysis above programme theory three and four state that;

*Programme theory three:*

*Staff cohesion (context) prompted by the need to incorporate SLCN related provision within CDYOS (mechanism; reasoning) will prompt learning together (mechanism; resource), which leads to the development of a service which is more communication friendly (outcome).*

*Programme theory four:*

*Having strong direction and purpose in the design of the service delivery (context), prompts a co-construction approach and collective view of need (mechanism; reasoning) building on individual specialisms and knowledge (mechanism; resource), which leads to more meaningful and relevant service delivery (outcome).*

## **9.4 Development of the service delivery model**

Service delivery models can take many forms. It was decided to adopt a logic model format to the development of the service delivery model for this research as it can take account of the various contextual influences and identified mechanisms all impacting upon delivery. Logic models, much like service delivery models vary immensely in terms of design, focus, detail, structure etc. The section below therefore provides a brief overview of logic models prior to using the programme theories identified in the section above to structure the development of the logic model for this research.

### ***Service delivery logic model development***

The adaption and development of Mill et al (2019) 'type 4' systems-based logic model (as detailed in chapter seven) allows for qualitative modelling of the dynamic and complex process of embedding SLCN related provision within a YOS setting. This approach has ensured that greater emphasis on the contextual influences has been able to be made within the model, in order that the mechanisms observed are viewed to interact within the overarching output of an embedded research culture. The mechanisms surrounding SLCN related provision within a YOS setting, continually interact and re-organise themselves into more elaborate structures over time resulting in 'emergent dominant forces' (Matthews et al, 1999) therefore creating a complex frame of reference within the logic model.

The programme theories (table 19) identified earlier in this chapter were used as the starting point for the logic model.

Table 19: Summary of initial programme theories

<b><i>Programme theory 1: Making it real</i></b> <i>Understanding of what SLCN related provision should look like (mechanism; reasoning), through increased awareness raising about SLCN (mechanism; resource) within the CDYOS (context) will lead to embedded practice changes within the service (outcome).</i>
<b><i>Programme theory 2: Core values</i></b> <i>Ensuring that the CDYOS is 'communication friendly' service (mechanism; resource) within a complex criminal justice context, young people engaging with the service are more likely to understand and comprehend what is going on (mechanism; reasoning) and can therefore engage more effectively with the service (outcome).</i>
<b><i>Programme theory 3: In the mix</i></b> <i>Staff cohesion (context) prompted by the need to incorporate SLCN related provision within CDYOS (mechanism; reasoning) will prompt learning together (mechanism;</i>

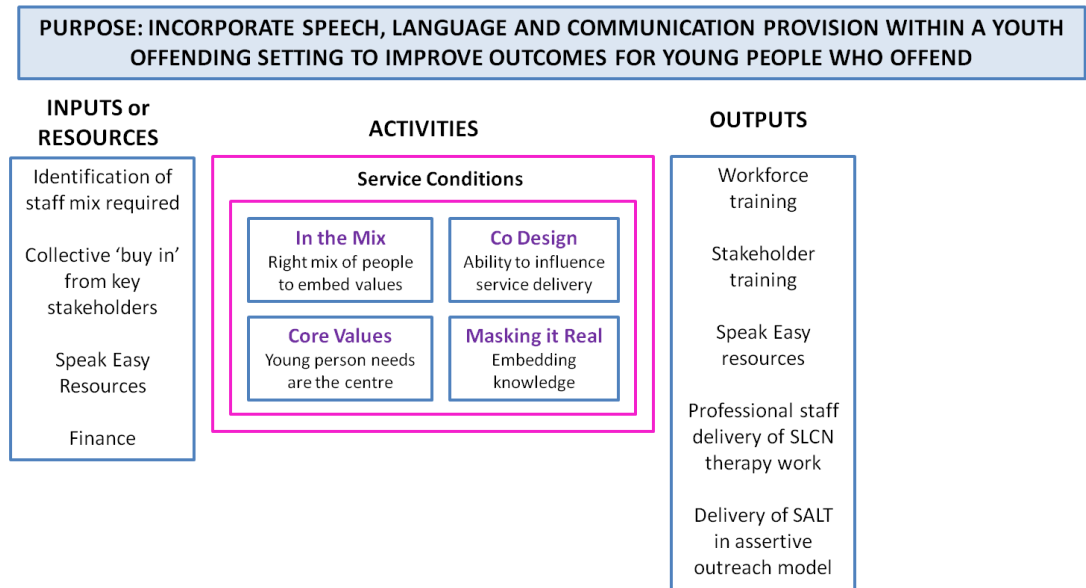
*resource), which leads to the development of a service which is more communication friendly (outcome).*

***Programme theory 4: Co-design***

*Having strong direction and purpose in the design of the service delivery (context), prompts a co-construction approach and collective view of need (mechanism; reasoning) building on individual specialisms and knowledge (mechanism; resource), which leads to more meaningful and relevant service delivery (outcome).*

The four programme theories detail how SLCN related provision can be implemented, embedded and become normalised behaviour within the context of the YOS delivery. The programme theories have therefore been termed 'service conditions' within the model. These conditions are influenced by the emerging inputs and resources identified within the findings and summarised to the left of the model. The programme theories have purposively been grouped under their headings rather than pulling out individual contributing generative mechanisms within the model, in order to ensure that the model can be kept simple to enable it to be a useful practical planning and development tool. The model (figure 15) provides the visual depiction of the service delivery model detailing inputs, activities and outputs. Success factors have been presented as a list at the right-hand side of the model and reflect comments made within the interviews and discussions had with CDYOS management team as to '...how do you know SLCN provision has been successful?'

Figure 15: Service delivery logic model – presented to CDYOS



The above model was taken to a meeting with the CDYOS management team and seconded SLT within CDYOS in order to discuss its relevance, and to understand if, from a practice point of view, it made sense. The model was endorsed by the CDYOS and collaborative work then began to identify the impact it could make (question two).

## 9.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the emerging findings from question one. The application of an NPT framework has allowed for generative mechanisms to be identified which give rise to normalising behaviours within the CDYOS, in relation to SLCN provision within the service. Through the analysis of findings in this framework, four central programme theories were developed pertaining the service conditions felt necessary to endorse SLCN provision within the CDYOS. These theories were used to develop a service delivery model for the CDYOS (see figure 15). Question two of the research starts with this model and looks to further the programme theories, alongside an evaluation to explore identified 'success factors' of incorporating SLCN related initiatives within the

CDYOS. The following chapters therefore look at developing an understanding of the consequent impacts and outcomes for young people as a result of the model.



## 10. Question 2: Methods

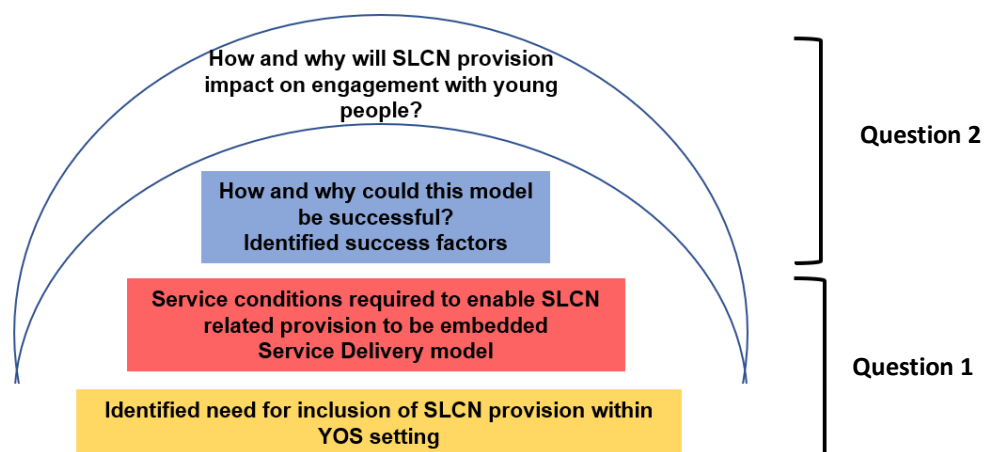
### 10.1 Introduction

Question one culminated in the development of a service delivery logic model with four programme theories explaining the service conditions required to embed SLCN related provision within the CDYOS. As touched on previously in Chapter one, originally question two aimed to provide an evaluation of the proposed model from question one. However, as the research progressed it became evident that although the fieldwork interviews in question one were structured around identifying what stakeholders thought best practice and 'ideal world' situations for SLCN related provision would be within CDYOS, the data gathered was more akin to that which would be collected for a service evaluation. Therefore, some of the data (detailed below) from question one is re-analysed for question two. The evolution of the research within a complex 'real-world' setting has resulted in a number of adaptations to the original proposed research. This, along with data access issues also explored in Chapter one, has resulted in question two being refocused on understanding if the development of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting can impact positively on engagement with young people in the service;

*2. Can the development of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting impact positively on engagement with young people in the service?*

Question two, therefore aims to understand the implications of SLCN related service provision on engagement between YOS and young people and also to identify what impact and outcome(s) a YOS with SLCN related service provision has for the service, for staff, and for young people. This question builds on the analysis and service delivery model development detailed within question one as highlighted in figure 16 below:

*Figure 16: Illustrative research components*



The methodological framework governing the research is detailed within Chapter six. This chapter therefore details the realist evaluation approach used to frame the collection of data methods for question two, with consideration given to the CAS context within which it sits. As with question one, the complexity of the topic has lent itself to a mixed methods approach. The next chapter, then presents the findings from question two, prior to a discussion of findings in Chapter twelve.

## 10.2 Question 2: Data collection

Question two focuses on what difference the incorporation of SLCN related provision can make. In order to address this, it was felt important to include the people who are actively involved with CDYOS, in order to identify their opinions as they work with the young people who are the subject of this intervention on a regular basis. The use of stakeholders within this research is a common theme in order to gain a greater understanding of both the topic in question (SLCN within YOS) and the local context. Stakeholder engagement is discussed in more detail within section 7.1.

Question two focus on what difference the incorporation of SLCN related provision within the YOS makes. Therefore, data collection centred on the idea of what would successful SLCN related provision look like through the identification of ‘success factors’, in order to identify what the implications of SLCN related service provision on engagement between YOS and young people are, and what outcomes might expect to be seen as a result.

### ***Identification of success factors***

Success factors were identified through stakeholder interviews (note: stakeholder interviews combined data capture for question one and two). Thirteen interviews were conducted with fifteen key stakeholders identified through an initial meeting with CDYOS (see section 7.1). Interviews took a semi-structured approach and lasted between 20 minutes to an hour. The overall focus of the interview was to get an understanding from the participant of how they felt speech, language and communication services ‘fit’ with a young person’s journey through the youth justice system and what types of services and resources they felt would be beneficial. See section 7.1 for a detailed overview of how stakeholders were selected to participate in the research.

Following the substantive focus of the interview on ‘type’ and ‘delivery methods’ of SLCN related provision within the YOS setting, a final question was asked about ‘what would success look like, in terms of successful integration of SLCN related provision within the YOS setting’ (see appendix J for interview schedule). It is this question which was included in the data collection for question two.

### ***Investigating success factors***

Identified success factors through the stakeholder interviews (as identified above) were taken to a meeting with CDYOS management team and the seconded SLT to explore and identify

- What makes each a success factor?
- How can they be evaluated and/or tested?
  - What data is required to undertake the evaluation/test?
- What is the required output from each factor?

The aim of these questions was to ascertain what elements of each success factor made it significant and pertinent to demonstrating the impact of SLCN related provision within the YOS. In addition, it was also important to understand if it was feasible to collect relevant data to support or disprove 'success'. This extensive use of stakeholders within the development allowed for the stakeholders collective extensive knowledge and understanding of the current delivery of the CDYOS, to assist in shaping the research and thus ensuring that the data requirements to support the research were feasible.

The broad range of identified success factors required a range of data collection methods in order to support or disprove 'success'. Methods here mainly relied on secondary analysis of data already held by the CDYOS or that obtained through question one. However, a staff perceptions self-completion questionnaire was also developed in order to understand attitudes towards and levels of knowledge regarding the incorporation of SLCN related provision within YOS and the perceived outcomes of such initiatives.

### ***Secondary data analysis***

As commented on in chapter one, access to data held by CDYOS was very problematic. This was due to two main reasons, firstly the data transfer of the case management system from Asset to AssetPlus was ongoing during the data collection phase of the research. This resulted in staff not having sufficient knowledge of the system in order to retrieve the data requested. A set number of pre-set reports, such as numbers in service were able to be downloaded from the system. However, more complex requests such as cross tabulation and individual level case data was not able to be downloaded from the system. Secondly, due to confidentiality, only Data Officer staff from the CDYOS were able to access the case system. It was not possible for anyone external to the CDYOS

to have access to the system. The extent to this lack of data access was not discovered until part way through data collection for question two.

Secondary data was collected in relation to:

- Breach rates
- Reoffending rates
- Referrals
- SLT feedback

#### Breach rates

Breach rates are used as a measure of conformity with engagement required by CDYOS. Local data was obtained from 2013/14 – 2016/17. Descriptive statistics were used to demonstrate overall breach rates, and breach rates as a percentage of the annual caseload. National data was also sourced from the Youth Justice Board's publicly available reports in order to provide a comparative illustrative benchmark.

#### Reoffending data

Reoffending rates are identified as a key performance indicator for all YOS. Information illustrating CDYOS re-offending rates was provided by CDYOS within a Health Needs Assessment. The assessment was carried out in 2017 and was able to also be used to provide contextual information regarding reoffending in CDYOS.

#### Referral data

Referral data, i.e. number of referrals to SLT from CDYOS team along with basic demographic information and whether or not they were categorised as suitable, was obtained from the SLT. Descriptive statistics were used to identify number of appropriate verses inappropriate referrals from staff to the SLT.

#### SLT Feedback

Note: these feedback forms were also used to inform the data collection for question one of this research. In May 2016 the SLT seconded into CDYOS started to collect feedback from young people, parents/carers and professionals that she worked with. The aim of

this exercise was to better understand how the work she undertakes is impacting upon the people she works with. With the consent of the CDYOS this research was able to receive anonymised copies of the feedback forms to include in the research.

From May – July 2016 38 feedback forms were received in total. These broke down to 17 from young people that had worked with the SLT, 16 from parents/carers of the young people that had worked with the SLT and 5 from professionals that the SLT had been working alongside.

The questions on the feedback forms are able to provide an insight of how the people who have experienced working with the SLT within a criminal justice context have viewed the experience and how they have, or have not, benefited from this involvement.

The feedback forms were devised by the SLT in order to allow her to understand and act upon comments received from the people she works with.

Initially the feedback forms were handed out by the SLT at the end of the last scheduled session and requested to be sent back. Overall this yielded very little results and so the SLT began to distribute the feedback forms during the last scheduled session and ask that they be completed prior to leaving.

### ***Staff perceptions questionnaire***

Following discussions with the CDYOS management team, it was agreed that a staff questionnaire would be more appropriate than interviews to elicit staff perceptions on SLCN related provision. This was due to restrictions on staff time, in addition to the fact that interviews had already been conducted in response to question one with staff and it was not felt appropriate to re-interview. Also, the creation of a short staff feedback questionnaire was discussed with CDYOS management to have the potential to be more inclusive by estimating that response rates would be higher than if interviews were used again. The staff questionnaire was developed at two pages long and contained a mix of

open and closed questions. Questions focused on the impact of SLCN awareness raising on their practices at CDYOS (see appendix K).

Questionnaires were distributed by Team Managers within the CDYOS to all staff who work with young people (n=56) and sent back to the Researcher. In total, 23 questionnaires were returned, a 41% response rate.

### **10.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided an overview of the methods used to answer question two. The focus of the question has led itself to secondary analysis of existing data alongside additional primary staff perceptions data in order to respond to identified success factors to establish what successful SLCN related provision look like, in order to identify what the implications of SLCN related service provision on engagement between YOS and young people are and what outcomes might expect to be seen as a result. By taking a mixed methods approach, the complexities of the research subject are able to be addressed and triangulation of data can be undertaken.

The following chapter builds on the information detailed within this chapter by presenting the results from question two.

## **11. Question 2: Results**

### **11.1 Introduction**

As discussed earlier in the thesis, the research has been split into two questions. The first aims to answer what a YOS SLCN model should look like and then the second explores what difference it makes. This chapter presents the findings from question two.

The chapter begins by exploring the identification and subsequent refinement of ‘success factors’ as described in chapter ten. By identifying what successful SLCN related provision can look like, we can start to investigate the impact of SLCN related service provision on engagement between YOS and young people, and what outcomes might expect to be seen as a result. Success factors in this sense, are not simply academic, but rather are seen as tools by which to identify and measure potential outcomes as a result of the interventions. Following the identification of these factors, data is presented in relation to each of the success factors to evidence its impact.

The data presented within this chapter are then discussed in chapter twelve prior to being considered alongside question one findings to provide overall conclusive comments in chapter thirteen.

### **11.2 Development of success factors**

Success factors within this research were not developed in order to simply provide a reference as to whether the model ‘worked’, but instead to look deeper and provide tangible outcomes and outputs relating to service development and the young people in the service, which we would expect to be seen from an effective service delivery model.

Realist approaches work towards a closer understanding of what causes change (Westhorp et al., 2011). Causation in this sense is viewed as generative, rather than



secessionist (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). The ideas behind what is viewed to cause change resulting in meaningful outcomes from SLCN related provision within the YOS setting is explored through the identification of success factors, and whether or not they are effective.

Within the stakeholder interviews the final question asked to participants was what they felt success would look like, in terms of SLCN related provision being successfully delivered within the context of the YOS. Overall, links to staff awareness levels, as with question one, again came through as being central to ensuring successful service delivery. However, aspects which related directly to young people were also seen with comments suggesting factors such as lower breach and reoffending rates would need to be seen. Comments were also made on how success should be viewed from those using the service and so aspects such as positive evaluations from service users and from training events also featured as marks for success. A few provided responses alluding to an overall success whereby the CDYOS would see both social and financial value added to the service, describing more of a cultural shift within the service. All responses were coded and the following core success factors emerged:

- Overall value added to the service – social and financial
- Regular staff awareness raising
- Lower breach rates
- No future engagement of the young person within the criminal justice system
- Staff awareness levels (of SLCN)
- Appropriate referrals being sent to and received by the SLT
- Positive service user feedback forms
- Positive training evaluation forms
- Positive evaluation of printed resources
- Individual goals of young people achieved
- Changing staff knowledge

### **Success factor refinement**

The proposed success factors from the service delivery model were discussed at length with the CDYOS management team and SLT in order to understand their potential relevance within the local context. The factors were then reduced from 11 to 7 during the meeting (see table 21). Four of the factors were combined to account for this reduction, as it was felt, following discussions, that they all related to increasing staff knowledge. In addition, one success factor 'evaluate printed resources' was removed as a separate evaluation will be undertaken in the future by CDYOS. The outputs from these discussions has been used as the framework to structure the data collection for question two.

*Table 20: Success factor evaluation refinement*

<b>Success factor identified through phase one</b>	<b>Refined success factors evaluated through phase two</b>
Value added – social and financial	Value added
Regular staff awareness raising	Increase CDYOS staff knowledge regarding SLCN
Individual goals/achievements for young people	
Changing staff knowledge	
Staff awareness levels	
Lower breach rates	Lower breach rates
No future engagement, including post 18 with probation	Reduction in reoffending

Appropriate referrals received (by SLT)	Appropriate referrals received by SLT
SU feedback forms	Feedback from engagement with SLT – young people & parents/carers
Training evaluation forms	Feedback from engagement with SLT – professionals at training events
Evaluate printed resources	<i>Remove</i>

Each of the success factors has a different focus and therefore requires a different data collection method. Table 21 provides an overview of each of the success factors along with the methods used to generate data in respect to each. The 'use of findings' section detailed within the table reflects discussions with the CDYOS. However, as commented previously, limited access to data has resulted in not all of the outputs being successfully measured due to a lack of access to data. In addition, the 'value added' success factor has been omitted from findings presented. This is because the 'value added' aims to bring together all the other success factors in order to provide an overview of what an effective YOS with speech and language provision model should look like. This is therefore addressed within chapter twelve where a comprehensive discussion of question two results is provided.

*Table 21: Question two evaluation framework*

Success Factor	Contribution of success factor	Evaluation method	Required data	Output	Use of findings
<b><i>Increase CDYOS staff knowledge regarding SLCN</i></b>	Staff are the key drivers of getting young people engaged in CDYOS. Therefore, if staff are able to understand and recognise SLCN they can adapt their working practices to ensure the young person remains engaged with the service and thus the CDYOS is more likely have a positive impact upon them.	Staff feedback via questionnaire  Staff feedback via model development interviews  Staff feedback from SLT feedback forms	Primary data to be collected from questionnaires Data already held from model development interviews and SLT feedback forms	Comprehensive understanding of CDYOS staff levels of awareness in respect of SLCN	Demonstrate level of SLCN understanding across staff group and how this has affected their working practices
<b><i>Lower breach rates</i></b>	Breach rates are used as a measure of conformity with the engagement required by CDYOS. It is assumed that if the young person is successfully engaging with the CDYOS then they are less likely to 'breach' their order	Secondary analysis of breach data over points in time in order to establish any trends	Data held by CDYOS on Careworks (online case management system used by CDYOS)	Trend analysis over a defined time period to demonstrate any significant differences in breach rates which may be attributed to the incorporation of a	Demonstrate levels of breach rates across a pre-defined time period and map significant events such as introduction of SLT and SLCN training against these events as well as other non SLCN events as highlighted by CDYOS which may impact on rates

				focus on SLCN within the CDYOS	
<b><i>Reduction in reoffending</i></b>	This is key performance indicator for all YOS. Successful engagement and completion of work with CDYOS is anticipated to result in reduced reoffending rates	Secondary analysis of reoffending data	Data contained in health needs assessment	Trend analysis to demonstrate any significant differences in reoffending rates which may be attributed to the incorporation of a focus on SLCN within the CDYOS	Demonstrate levels of reoffending rates across a pre-defined time period and map significant events such as introduction of SALT and SLCN training against these events as well as other non SLCN events as highlighted by CDYOS which may impact on rates
<b><i>Appropriate referrals received by SLT</i></b>	If staff are identifying young people with SLCN correctly then referrals to the SLT should be appropriate	Identify and explore levels of appropriate vs. inappropriate referrals across staff groups within CDYOS to the SLT to identify any trends	Referral data from SLT	CDYOS staff will need to have a good level of understanding of SLCN in order to make appropriate referrals into the SLT	Levels of appropriate referrals can be used to demonstrate staff understanding of SLCN and evidence that the team know when to refer a young person to the SLT
<b><i>Feedback from engagement with SLT – young people &amp; parents/carers</i></b>	Identification of how satisfied young people and their parents/carers are with their engagement with the SLT	Analysis of data collected via SLT feedback forms	Data from SLT feedback forms	Satisfaction levels and awareness of how involvement with the SLT within CDYOS has influenced behaviours	Satisfaction levels from those engaging with the SLT will assist in evidencing how young people and their families/carers find the experience and what they are able to 'get out of it'

<b><i>Feedback from engagement with SLT – professional</i></b>	Identification of how satisfied professionals who receive SLCN training are with their engagement with the SLT	Analysis of data collected via SLT feedback forms	Data from SALT feedback forms	Satisfaction levels and awareness of how involvement with the SALT within CDYOS has influenced behaviours	

### 11.3 Findings from success factors

Each of the identified success factors are taken in turn within this section. Underpinning programme theories prompting their inclusion are detailed, derived from the interview findings, followed by the data collection theory refinement process as part of their analysis. The results of these success factors aim to identify supplementary programme theories to support the service delivery model in order to provide greater understanding as to how, and why, the service delivery model can make a difference. This is achieved by the identification of the generative mechanisms which have been triggered in the context of the CDYOS with SLCN related provision.

#### ***Increase CDYOS staff knowledge regarding SLCN***

Staff are the key drivers of engaging young people within CDYOS, indeed question one highlighted the importance of staff awareness in relation to SLCN in prompting more effective engagement with the young people they work with. It was concluded that staff need to make sense of what is going on around them by increasing their awareness of SLCN, in order to allow for, and make necessary provisions for young people with SLCN they may be working with. Therefore based on the findings from question one, if staff increase their awareness of SLCN, practices can be adapted to ensure young people remain engaged with the service, and thus the CDYOS is more likely have a positive impact upon them. It is therefore hypothesised that;

*In the context of staff being more aware of SLCN (context) they will have the knowledge to adapt their working practices (mechanism; reasoning) in order to deliver relevant support to young people (mechanism; resource) to ensure engagement with the service (outcome).*

In order to understand levels of SLCN awareness, a questionnaire was distributed to all staff within CDYOS by Team Managers (see appendix K). There were 23 completed questionnaires returned to the Researcher indicating a response rate of 41%. Due to the

small sample size, descriptive analysis has been undertaken on the data rather than statistical analysis.

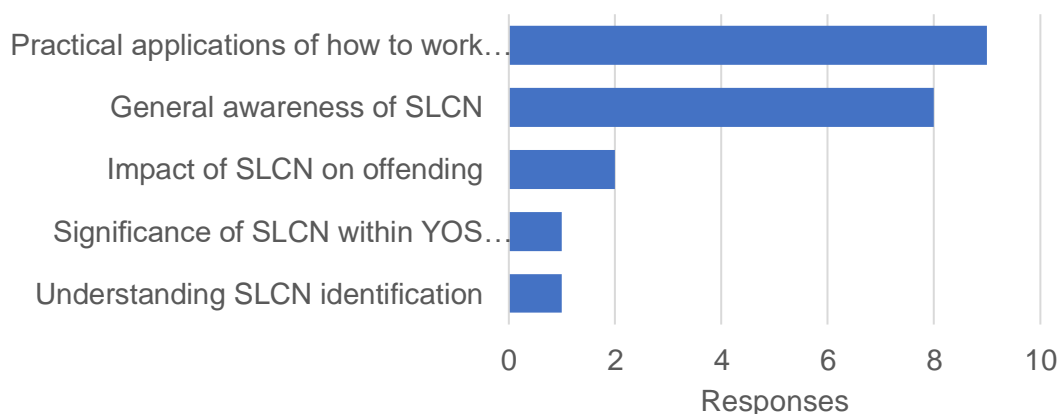
All staff who completed the questionnaire reported having received at least one type of speech, language and communication training. The training included;

- Informal discussions/training with colleagues (n=12)
- Informal discussions/training with SLT (n=16)
- Formal training with SLT as part of my introduction (n=7)
- Formal training with SLT half day/full day (n=20)
- Formal training with SLT as a refresher (n=3)

Most staff indicated that they had received more than one form of training, with the majority receiving formal training lasting half or a full day delivered by the seconded SLT.

The training was seen to provide staff with new skills. Responses to the question '*What was the main thing you took from the training*' highlighted that practical applications of the knowledge gained in how to engage and work with young people, along with a general awareness and greater understanding of SLCN were the key features of the training.

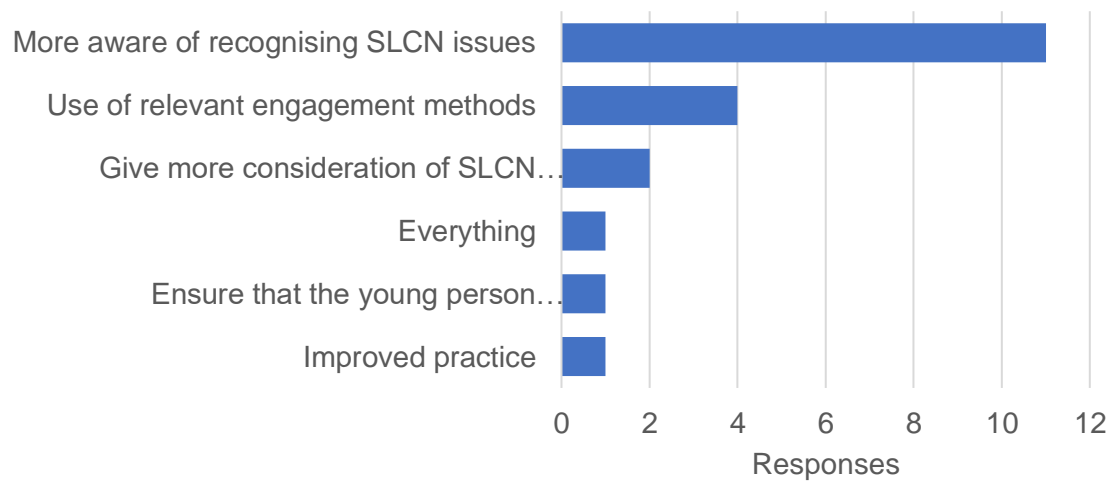
Figure 17: Coded questionnaire responses – What was the main thing you took from the training?





All bar one of the respondents (who did not complete the question) stated that they felt the training has or will affect their working practices within the CDYOS. Overall, most felt that the training would assist in making them more aware of being able to recognise SLCN related issues in young people. A number of people did also comment that they would now look to use relevant engagement methods with the individuals worked with (see figure 18 below).

*Figure 18: Coded questionnaire responses – How have working practices been affected?*



On a rating scale of knowing a lot, a fair bit, a little, or none, the majority of respondents rated their current knowledge of SLCN in the context of young people who offend as, ‘I know a fair amount about speech, language and communication needs and how they can affect young people’ (n=18). 3 felt that they knew a lot, and 2 stated that they knew a little.

All respondents stated that the knowledge they had gained about SLCN has or is anticipated to (if training has only just been complete) influence their working practices. An open text box was included on the questionnaire and a number of examples were given on how SLCN knowledge has been used in practice within the CDYOS (see table 24). Examples provided varied, but included adopting different approaches to

engagement, increased consideration of understanding by young people, making use of the referral pathways in place for more specialist support as and when required, the use of more appropriate engagement methods including visual strategies and using developed resources (as described in question one). Table 22 below details the individual responses provided within each of these codes.

Table 22: Questionnaire responses – Example of how knowledge of SLCN has been used in practice?

Code	Questionnaire response
Adopting different approaches	<p><i>When I work with a young person with SLCN I will be patient with them and take time with the young person</i></p> <p><i>Discussions/regulations of emotions in professional meetings. Challenge efficiency</i></p> <p><i>Remember on interview/assessment techniques that can be used with SLCN have been identified</i></p> <p><i>Listening actively to young people. Understanding their needs. Having quality time to assess and support</i></p> <p><i>Questions in assessments are slowed down, use of vocabulary changer</i></p> <p><i>Improve communication skills with YP. Access support for YP going through courts. Advocate within court area, support solicitors &amp; other court users</i></p>
Increased checking that young people understand	<p><i>Influence use of explaining and checking back with YP and their parents/carers to gain a better understanding of their needs</i></p> <p><i>Ensuring understanding - using pictures/repetition of information - saying it back to check understanding</i></p>
Making use of referral pathways for specialist assistance	<p><i>Referring of young person for a full SLCN assessment due to their constant interrupting, muttering and concerns highlighted when completing the screening tool</i></p> <p><i>Court intermediary</i></p> <p><i>Make appropriate referrals to SLCN team</i></p>

<p><i>Use of appropriate language/ communication including visual methods</i></p>	<p><i>Being able to identify difficulties' in young people during assessments and using appropriate language and skills to support young person</i></p> <p><i>Recently issued a young person with a youth conditional caution and it was identified he had SLCN prior to my appointment. Consulted with Susan re the wording of the caution and used pictures to explain the process with the young person. This worked extremely well</i></p> <p><i>SLCN friendly interventions/programmes. Has changed how I communicate verbally and in writing (even text messages - making sure they're clear) Also more confident in recognising potential issues</i></p> <p><i>When I plan sessions I will pay more attention to the language I use, the instructions I give to make sure it is understood</i></p> <p><i>Consider how questions are asked and waiting for responses</i></p> <p><i>Completion of care assessment. Preparation/delivery of session</i></p> <p><i>My choice of activity and use of language, pace and tone when working with YP</i></p>
<p><i>Use of developed resources</i></p>	<p><i>Working at the young person's level and understanding explanations and use of word buster/visual references</i></p> <p><i>SLCN screening tool and referrals</i></p> <p><i>Using appropriate SLCN letters, tools to support family and make a referral</i></p>

Staff awareness on the topic of SLCN is seen to have been successfully increased following completion of training within CDYOS. Descriptive analysis of the questionnaires supports the notion that staff feel they are aware of SLCN issues within the context of CDYOS. In addition, awareness raising is seen to equip staff with the knowledge to adapt working practices, ensuring support is relevant to the individual. Therefore, the proposed programme theory remains as:

*In the context of staff being more aware of SLCN (context) they will have the knowledge to adapt their working practices (mechanism; reasoning) in order to deliver relevant*

*support to young people (mechanism; resource) to ensure engagement with the service (outcome).*

### **Lower breach rates**

Young people who offend may be given a community sentence if convicted rather than sentenced to custody. These community sentences mainly include (but are not limited to);

- Referral orders – young person is asked to agree a programme of work to address their behaviour
- Reparation orders – young person must address the harm caused by their crime, i.e. repair damage to victim's property
- Youth Rehabilitation Order – court dictated activities on what must and must not do, which can last for up to three years.

If the young person does not comply with any requirement of their 'order' (sentence) then they are said to be in breach. Breach rates are used nationally as a measure of conformity with the engagement required, with data collected accordingly from each YOS. It is perceived that if a young person is successfully engaging with the YOS then they are less likely to 'breach' their order. It is therefore proposed that;

*In the context of a YOS which provides SLCN related provision (context) young people will be able to engage more effectively with the service (mechanism; resource) through increased understanding (mechanism; reasoning) and are therefore less likely to breach their order (outcome).*

The above programme theory is very simplistic and almost linear in the fact that it is stated SLCN provision will increase engagement, which will decrease breach rates. In reality and through the adoption of a complex systems lens, it is acknowledged that the engagement with, and therefore SLCN provision within YOS is not undertaken in isolation. There are numerous compounding factors on the young people and therefore

this is only one element of the system surrounding the individual. In addition, as highlighted in chapter three, as the cohort of young people in contact with the YOS has reduced at a national level, the most prolific and complex young people have been left in the system. This will therefore also have an impact on reoffending rates. However, the national focus on the importance placed on breach rates as a measure of conformity has resulted in their inclusion within this analysis.

Table 23 illustrates that breach rates have fallen overall since the first introduction of SLCN provision within CDYOS. As detailed in figure one, SLCN provision within CDYOS started in 2013 with an initial wave of SLCN awareness training for staff. This was followed by further staff awareness raising initiatives in 2014 and subsequent resource development in 2014/15, before also including clinical SLT interventions from 2015 onwards. However, although the incorporation of SLCN provision correlates with the reduction in breach rates, it cannot be stated to be causal. In order to understand the breach rates fully an individual case study analysis approach would need to be taken on each young person within the CDYOS so that circumstances surrounding whether the order was completed or breached could be identified, and impact of SLCN provision determined. This however, is not feasible within this research. The data does however provide a picture of the longitudinal breach rates over a 5 year period, indicating general trends in breach rates.

*Table 23: Breach rates*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of breaches</b>	<b>Total caseload</b>	<b>Breaches as % of caseload</b>
2012/13	105	382	27%
2013/14	98	351	28%
2014/15	48	337	14%
2015/16	51	313	16%
2016/17	32	321	10%

Although whilst not directly comparable due to incompatibilities with date ranges, national data has been taken from annual reports by the Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice in order to provide an illustrative benchmark for the local level data in table 23. Table 24 below highlights that at a national level breach rates have been relatively static over the past ten years. This could therefore suggest that interventions put in place within CDYOS, including SLCN related provision amongst others, are bringing down breach rates to be more in-line with national trends. This however, is speculative and cannot be substantiated.

*Table 24: National breach rate data*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of breaches<sup>8</sup></b>	<b>Total caseload<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>Breaches as % of caseload</b>
2007	15,910	175,108	9%
2008	16,751	166,631	10%
2009	15,877	141,233	11%
2010	12,544	114,463	11%
2011	10,197	89,399	11%
2012	6,947	71,507	10%
2013	4,942	53,403	9%
2014	4,583	43,046	11%
2015	4,053	36,785	11%
2016	3,577	31,543	11%

Due to the limited data able to be acquired to test the programme theory in relation to lower breach rates, the theory cannot be supported and is therefore suspended.

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<sup>8</sup> Taken from Table 4.1: Proven offences by children and young people by offence group, years ending March 2007 to March 2017 (YJB/MoJ 2018)

<sup>9</sup> Taken from Table 3.7: Children and young people with proven offences resulting in a youth caution or conviction from the PNC, years ending March 2007 to March 2017 (YJB/MoJ 2018)

### ***Reduction in reoffending***

Similar to the breach rate data presented above, reduction in reoffending numbers is a key performance indicator for all YOS and is reported at a national level. Again, as with breach rates, successful engagement and completion of work with YOS is anticipated to result in reduced reoffending rates, therefore:

*In the context of a YOS which provides SLCN related provision (context) young people will be able to engage more effectively with the service (mechanism; resource) through increased understanding (mechanism; reasoning) and are therefore less likely to reoffend (outcome).*

However, as noted in the breach rate data, reduction in reoffending rates cannot be viewed in isolation. They make-up part of a much wider system impacted upon by numerous factors. In addition, the reduction in numbers of young people within the youth criminal justice system and increased complex and prolific nature of those now in the system compared to previous years mean direct comparisons of reoffending rates over time, and extent to which the trends have been informed by changes to the work of YOS cannot easily be made (Roberts et al, 2019).

In 2017 the CDYOS carried out an extensive Health Needs Assessment. Within this assessment a 'risk of re-offending' was carried out. This included analysis of all Asset assessments on young people between 1 April and 30 September 2015. This analysis stated that 'Thinking and Behaviour' is the greatest risk in terms of predicting future re-offending behaviour. Thinking and behaviour is defined within this assessment to include patterns of thinking and types of behaviour which cause difficulties for a young person in any part of their lives, such as:

- *Lack of understanding of consequences*
- *Impulsiveness*
- *Need for excitement*
- *Giving in easily to pressure from others*
- *Inappropriate social and communication skills*

- *Offending behaviour*
- *Destructive/Aggressive behaviour*
- *Sexually inappropriate behaviour* (Durham County Council, 2017 p54)

Many of the elements in the definition listed above relate to SLCN. Suggesting therefore to support the notion that addressing SLCN will assist in reducing re-offending. However, as with breach rates, this can only be speculative as relevant data has not been able to be obtained to confirm or disprove this theory. Therefore, the theory cannot be supported and is suspended.

### ***Appropriate referrals received by SLT***

Linked to increase staff awareness of SLCN, it is proposed that if staff are more aware of SLCN then they will make appropriate referrals to the SLT. In this context referrals relate to a set of defined relationships which are formed as the young people's needs dictate, using sound principles of case management and building in flexibility and adaptability to meet individual need (Centre for Substance Abuse Treatment, 2000). Within the CDYOS if a member of staff feels the young person they are working with has SLCN which cannot be met by the staff member, through adapted working practices such as increased use of visual communication methods for example, they can refer the young person to the SLT within the CDYOS for clinical interventions to address their individual needs. This referral requires the CDYOS staff to have an awareness and appreciation of SLCN and corresponding issues in order to be able to identify when a young person would benefit from additional specialist help from the SLT. Therefore, it is proposed that;

*In the context of staff being more aware of SLCN (context) they will have the knowledge of when to refer a young person for specialist support (mechanism; reasoning) from the seconded SLT (mechanism; resource) ensuring an appropriate referral takes place (outcome).*



No formal recoding procedures are set up within CDYOS for tracking referrals from staff to the seconded SLT. The SLT therefore kept a log on Microsoft Excel of all referrals received. Access to this log with young person identifiable information removed, was provided to the Researcher. As data fields had already been identified and completed by the SLT there was no scope for the researcher to input and amend recording information. Analysis below is therefore based on the data available.

From 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015 (when SLT first started receiving referrals) until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (data capture point) there had been 108 referrals made to the SLT of young people within CDYOS. 83% were male and ages ranged from 10 years 1 month to 18 years 3 months. 20% of the referrals had previously been referred to a SLT (note: it was not stated if this was in the community or previously through the CDYOS).

Of the 108 referrals, 3 were awaiting review, 74 were offered an assessment appointment by the SLT within CDYOS and 31 were passed to community based (core) SLT services as the young person had been or was about to be closed to CDYOS. Note, young people are often only in contact with CDYOS for a short space of time and therefore not all were able to be seen prior to their disengagement with the service, prompting the referral to core services.

All referrals made to the SLT were deemed to be relevant. Therefore, the proposed programme theory remains

### ***Feedback from engagement with SALT – young people & parents/carers***

Chapter seven details the findings from the feedback forms. These forms were developed by the SLT seconded into CDYOS in order to collect feedback from young people, parents and carers, and professionals she was involved with. Although the findings were used to inform the evidence base for question one, they are reanalysed here within question two in order to comment on the perceived success of the

engagements of young people and parents and carers with the SLT. It is hypothesised that:

*If young people, parents and carers have successful involvement with the SLT (context), this will prompt behaviour change (mechanism; resource) through increased awareness and understanding of SLCN (mechanism; reasoning) and increase successful engagement with the CDYOS (outcome).*

From May – July 2016, 17 feedback forms had been received from young people that had worked with the SLT and 16 from parents or carers of the young people that had worked with the SLT.

Overall, 15 of the 16 parents and carers felt that it was useful for their child to work with the SLT with all 15 stating that they had been given ideas from the SLT on how to better engage with their child. The ideas provided to the parents and carers through these sessions prompted behavioural changes with 8 of the parents who stated that since the sessions, they have changed the way they talk with their child (2, had not changed, 1 did not know if changes had been made and 5 did not respond to the question).

The most use useful aspects of the involvement with the SLT were reported to be the ‘tools’ gained by the parents and carers in assisting their understanding of SLCN and therefore promoting more effective communication and engagement with their child.

The majority of the young people who completed the feedback forms (n=12) stated that working with the SLT was useful (4 didn’t know and 1 stated it was not useful). Just over half (n=11) of the young people identified that that the SLT had given them ideas to make communication with other people easier, five did not know if they had been given ideas and one did not feel they had been given any ideas.

Due to the importance of the family environment, especially in relation to the provision of support for the young person, having family members as well as the young people themselves been made more aware of SLCN, and given ‘tools’ to assist with

communication is of central importance in promoting effective engagement with the CDYOS. Therefore the proposed theory remains.

### ***Feedback from engagement with SLT – professional***

As with the young people and parent and carer feedback forms, the professional feedback forms were discussed within chapter seven but have been reviewed within question two in order to comment on the perceived success of the engagement of professionals with the SLT. Only five feedback forms were completed by professionals. Due to the lack of data, results are presented below which relate to the outcomes of these engagements but no individual programme theory is proposed. The findings below will however, still be included within the overall programme theory refinement discussed below.

Four of the five responses to the questionnaire were very positive, stating the SLT's work was 'excellent'. Following the engagement with the SLT all four reported changing how they worked with the young person seen by the SLT and felt that the report provided by the SLT was useful. Having detailed specific guidance for the young person, along with the opportunity to discuss specifics with the SLT was commented on to be the most beneficial aspect of the working with the SLT. The fifth respondent felt that the engagement with the SLT was 'not good' and did not meet their needs or the needs of the young person due to the session focusing on a younger age than the young person and therefore felt it was patronising.

There are clearly benefits of professionals engaging with the SLT, as highlighted above. However, the low response rate does not allow for any generalizable conclusions to be drawn from this.

## **11.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has detailed the findings from question two of the research which has sought to explore what difference SLCN related provision can make through the identification of relevant success factors. The importance of SLCN awareness raising with CDYOS staff and the impact this has on service delivery alongside engagement with young people, as with question one, has been evidenced throughout question two as the core mechanisms enabling SLCN provision within the YOS setting. Chapter twelve takes this concept and explores it further through providing a discussion of question two findings alongside the findings from question one.

## **12. Question 2: Discussion**

### **12.1 Introduction**

Up to 90% of young offenders are thought to have some form of SLCN (Hughes et al., 2012). Young offenders with a SLCN should therefore be treated as the norm rather than as an exception. In order to address this, whole scale system transformation, focusing on threading through SLCN related provision within the YOS needs to be undertaken. Question one within this research identified four central programme theories pertaining the service conditions felt necessary to endorse SLCN provision within the CDYOS. A subsequent service delivery model was then developed based on these conditions. Question two has built on question one, aiming to detail what difference the incorporation of SLCN related provision can make within the CDYOS. This was addressed through the identification and subsequent exploration of 'success factors'. The broad range of success factors identified represented the reach of the impact from the incorporation of SLCN related provision within the YOS. This chapter presents a discussion of the findings from question two, exploring the concepts linked to identifying the differences made through the incorporation of SLCN related provision.

### **12.2 What difference does SLCN related provision make?**

When looking to address question two, what difference does SLCN related provision within the YOS make, it must be acknowledged that it is not a simple question, of a simple intervention. As explored in previous chapters, SLCN provision within the YOS is a complex intervention within a complex context. The difference here is therefore explored in relation to the impact this provision can have on the service provided, and on the individuals in receipt of the service. The key connecting factor here is the engagement of the young people within the YOS.

Evidencing engagement is not straightforward. The CDYOS does not act in isolation. It is a complex service which sits within the local authority with strategic and operational

links to both the local authority and the Youth Justice Board. Interventions delivered as part of the YOS are therefore influenced by external contextual conditions. In addition, the young people engaging with the YOS are also not doing so in isolation. They will have a number of additional internal and external contextual conditions influencing their behaviours, such as family life, involvement with educational structures, with social services for example.

Due to the complexity of evidencing the difference that engaging with SLCN related provision within the CDYOS can make, a number of success factors were explored within the remit of question two of this research. The use of success factors has allowed for implications of SLCN related service provision on engagement between YOS and young people to be identified, along with what outcomes might expect to be seen as a result. This therefore relates to the notion of causation whereby meaningful change (outcomes) from SLCN related provision within the YOS setting are explored through the identification of success factors, and whether or not they are effective.

### ***Awareness raising***

Increased awareness levels in relation to SLCN of staff members directly impact on the universal service (i.e. delivered to all) provided within the CDYOS. Making SLCN related provision part of the embedded universal service offered by the YOS provides effective, inclusive, communication environments for all young people engaged with the service. Ebbels et al. (2018, p6) identify two core areas for the focus of SLT within universal provision:

1. Improving the ability of parents and professionals to identify speech, language and/or communication difficulties in children
2. Enhancing interaction to maximize opportunities for all children to develop good communication skills

Staff reported being more able to recognise SLCN issues with young people and being able to adapt and use relevant engagement methods as a result of increased awareness.

Increasing awareness of SLCN in order to 'upskill' staff is not unique to the YOS. Awareness raising through professional development activities is increasingly used to improve staff skills and knowledge about providing quality language and emergent literacy environments for young people, particularly in education settings. However, there is a lack of literature regarding the effectiveness and impacts of such efforts (Markussen-Brown, 2017). The evidence that is available in relation to impacts of increased awareness of SLCN related issues by professionals working with young people often focuses on the changes to oral and literacy skills of the young people (Snow et al, 2014, Starling et al 2012, Markussen-Brown, 2017), rather than on their levels of engagement. This research, as it is not clinically based, did not go so far as to investigate the effects of increased staff awareness in increasing the language skills of the young people involved with the CDYOS, but rather looked to understand the impact on engagement of young people. Interviews with young people and feedback forms from young people engaging with the SLT were obtained and overall feedback was positive with young people reporting overall that engagement with their CDYOS workers and the service in general was good. However, it was not possible to ascertain if the awareness raising undertaken by staff had impacted on this from the feedback obtained through the young people as all interviews with young people and feedback forms collected were undertaken post awareness raising training had taken place. Therefore, comparisons with previous practices were not able to be undertaken. To try and limit the effect of this, questions had been asked to staff as to how their working practices had been affected. All staff reported changes with their working practices following awareness raising training, suggesting therefore that increased knowledge of SLCN related issues was in fact altering staff behaviours within CDYOS. Therefore in relation to the question, what difference can SLCN related provision within a YOS setting make? This provision can alter the prevailing culture and delivery methods employed by the staff which has been suggested (by staff) to increase engagement with young people.

### ***Direct outcomes***

As part of identifying what difference the incorporation of SLCN related provision within the CDYOS can have, a number of direct outcomes were explored. These included breach rates, reoffending rates and appropriate versus inappropriate referrals from the CDYOS to the SLT. Although labelled as direct outcomes, these outcomes cannot be solely attributed to the incorporation of SLCN related provision due to the complexity of the make-up of both the CDYOS and the delivery of the SLCN related provision. However evidence does suggest some level of correlation even if not proving causation. Heritage et al (2011) give the example that a young person's order stated that they should '*refrain from loitering outside retail premises*'. Due to a failure of understanding what was meant by the terminology, the young person was breached for failure to comply.

Overall local CDYOS statistics in relation to breach and reoffending rates look promising. Since the introduction of SLCN related provision, rates within the CDYOS were seen to fall. However, along with the inclusion of SLCN there have been a number of other initiatives delivered through and alongside the YOS which will have impacted upon these statistics. Due to the complexity of the formation of the CDYOS attribution of these statistics cannot solely be placed on the provision of SLCN related initiatives.

## **12.3 Conclusion**

It is impossible to untangle the component parts of the CDYOS in order to state the difference the incorporation of SLCN related provision within the service makes. The impact of the provision is therefore better suited to be expressed in the format of programme theories which detail the mechanisms in respect to the resource and reasoning being delivered within particular contextual settings to inform outcomes. Programme theories relating to the difference SLCN related provision has, include:

*In the context of staff being more aware of SLCN (context) they will have the knowledge to adapt their working practices (mechanism; reasoning) in order to deliver relevant*



*support to young people (mechanism; resource) to ensure engagement with the service (outcome).*

*In the context of a YOS which provides SLCN related provision (context) young people will be able to engage more effectively with the service (mechanism; resource) through increased understanding (mechanism; reasoning) and are therefore less likely to breach their order (outcome).*

*If young people, parents and carers have successful involvement with the SLT (context), this will prompt behaviour change (mechanism; resource) through increased awareness and understanding of SLCN (mechanism; reasoning) and increase successful engagement with the CDYOS (outcome).*

These programme theories are explored alongside the programme theories from question one in the next chapter in order to discuss core emerging mechanisms influencing SLCN related provision within a YOS setting and associated outcomes.

## **13. Discussion and Conclusion**

### **13.1 Introduction**

This research has looked to move from an exploration of the general knowledge in the area of SLCN within youth justice to the development of local understanding in terms of identifying what speech, language and communication provision should look like. This has been achieved through the development of programme theories based on locally collected data and informed by national literature to produce theories about the contextual conditions within which mechanisms operate to produce relevant outcomes. This has been undertaken within a complexity informed realist approach, where it has been acknowledged that the social systems of both the SLCN related provision and the YOS are complex with multiple objectives, strategies and components.

This chapter provides a succinct reflection on the previously presented discussion chapters. It brings together the conclusions from questions one and two in order to highlight overall implications for the incorporation of speech, language and communication provision within a YOS setting, as well as reflecting on the methodological approach employed. Consideration is given to the requirement for SLCN related provision within a YOS setting, prior to an exploration of the component parts of the programme theories presented from chapters nine and eleven before final conclusions are drawn.

### **13.2 The requirement for SLCN related provision within a YOS setting**

The need for SLCN related provision is evidenced at the individual, micro and service, meso levels. At an individual level SLCN can be viewed to act as a barrier to engagement with the YOS. The YJS exposes young people to a range of experiences, including police interviews, court proceedings and therapeutic intervention programs for example, that draw heavily on expressive and receptive language skills (Lavigne & van Rybroek, 2011).

Therefore, lacking in one or more of these skill set areas can cause issues for young people in engaging with the processes. Indeed, if a young person lacks the ability to accurately receive information conveyed to them, such as legal rights and responsibilities, or the ability to clearly express themselves, this can cause major consequences in relation to engagement with criminal justice procedures. In addition, SLCN often have strong links to identified offending risk factors, with the situations young people find themselves in as a consequence of their SLCN often increasing the likelihood of experiencing risk factors. A key risk factor here often relates to the fact that young people with SLCN often do not have the breadth, or depth to their education that peers who do not experience these difficulties have (Snowling, Adams, Bishop, & Stothard, 2001 cited in Games et al, 2012). And thus, exposing themselves to more situations which may further exacerbate the risk of ongoing social marginalisation (Snow, 2009).

If SLCN are not appropriately addressed and/or relevant provisions made for within the criminal justice system, the interventions delivered as part of a young person's order, for example, may not be able to reach their full potential. This is in respect of changing and reducing subsequent offending behaviours of the young person due to a lack of being able to understand and/or fully engage with the intervention on the part of the young person. Engagement in this sense, not only relates to ensuring that all young people have access to criminal justice services, but that they are empowered through the notion of being able to effectively engage in changing their offending behaviours (Case, 2006). The notion of assisting with engagement through the delivery of SLCN related provision, has been threaded through this research. A young person not effectively engaging with the services and processes being placed on them may lead to a repetition of offences and non-compliance (Bercow, 2008). A lack of awareness about the impacts of SLCN and in relation to understanding and interpreting instructions by justice professionals can therefore jeopardise chances of compliance, and as a result lead to further experiences of failure by the young person (RCSLT, 2012). Ensuring young people are effectively engaged in services is therefore of central importance at the micro level of the individual, as well as at meso and macro levels where reductions in re-offending are sought.

At the service, meso level, young people are viewed to come into contact with many obstacles as a result of SLCN that have not been directly addressed. Therefore identifying and addressing these obstacles through increased awareness training for staff can assist in preventing and reducing re-offending rates by enabling young people to access a wider range of rehabilitation programmes and subsequently empower them to change their offending behaviour (Case, 2006).

Explanations for how these relationships are evidenced and composed are detailed as programme theories within this research. Relevant contextual conditions which give rise to the combination of resources (mechanism) offered by the intervention and the reasoning (mechanism) that these are able to enhance in a particular context and leading to measurable or observable outcomes (Dalkin et al, 2015) have been postulated. The next section of this discussion seeks to explore the programme theories presented within chapters nine and eleven prior to presenting a consolidated programme theory which summarises the effect of SLCN related provision within the YOS setting.

### **13.3 Reflection on the use of a complexity-informed realist approach**

This research provides a unique contribution to the literature by developing programme theories pertaining to the key aspects of SLCN provision which impact on engagement levels of young people within a YOS setting. The methodological focus has allowed for an innovative sociological based approach to the topic area. Prior research has been conducted focusing on the extent of SLCN within youth criminal settings, however little evidence has been produced concerning the how and why this needs to be addressed. This research therefore addresses this gap by providing theoretically based practical considerations with regards to the placement of SLCN related provision within a YOS setting and the outcomes it can expect to achieve through a case study approach.

The notion of introducing SLCN related provision within a YOS setting is complex (as explored in earlier chapters). It therefore required a methodological approach which was able to address and embrace these complexities whilst enabling an analytical appraisal

from which to draw conclusions. The research was undertaken in conjunction with the CDYOS. This had significant influence on the methodological approach adopted. The research was not being conducted in a 'sterile setting' free from external influence, but instead in a YOS which was constantly changing and adapting to the day-to-day contextual conditions they were faced with. Combining complexity and realist paradigms through the notion of complex causality, allowed this research to address these complexities of a 'real world' intervention (SLCN provision) within a complex environment (CDYOS). Both realism and complexity acknowledge the importance of the contextual environment surrounding the implementation of an initiative and the subsequent impact this has on outcomes achieved. However, through combining these approaches within this research it has been possible to identify 'how' the complex situational environment has impacted on the generative mechanisms identified, and subsequently how this then impacts on the incorporation of SLCN related provision within the YOS. Thus, providing a practical based exploratory framework able to yield relevant results.

The use of conceptual frameworks (complex adaptive systems and realist evaluation) in this research, within the constructs of a complexity informed realist framework provided direction. The application of this framework allowed for data to be explored in relation to its contextual conditions and thus identify the emerging generative mechanisms at play. This led to a detailed appreciation and understating of the reasoning behind why the mechanisms have they effects they do at the macro, meso and micro level. This was able to be addressed without being reductionist, and allowed for the notion of agency to feature in the analysis. Through this, the agency-structure relationship is able to acknowledge the 'human effect', a crucial factor when looking at systems through their impact on interactions and explanations of the causal sequences observed (Cochran-Smith et al., 2014). Indeed, as the research developed the importance of the role staff play in relation to providing the mechanisms to facilitate and promote effective engagement of the young people within the YOS emerged. The framework adopted allowed for the further exploration of the effects this produced which was detailed within the developed programme theories.

Within the data analysis further constructs were introduced, normalisation process theory and logic models. These constructs were able to aid the interpretation of the emerging data by framing it in such a way that further explanatory potential could be extracted alongside practical considerations linking directly to the work of the CDYOS. These practical considerations set the research apart from previous studies. In addition, this focus allowed for a close working relationship with the CDYOS to be developed whereby findings were able to be fed back and used by the CDYOS in order to assist with future service developments.

The main limitation of the approach taken within this research is the potential for generalisable results, since all conclusions are contextual. For this reason NPT was used to frame the discussion, however this could be seen as a motive for more research within this frame of reference to aid further understanding between different contexts.

### **13.4 Exploration of the programme theories**

This research has been guided by two research questions. Question one acted as a baseline qualitative study which provided the evidence base for the need of SLCN provision at the local level, and went some way in specifying what that provision should be through the identification of four programme theories (see figure 20) contained within a service delivery model. As a result of the aim of question one, to identify what a YOS SLCN model should look like, the programme theories relate to service conditions within which staff and stakeholders operate to provide the relevant services and initiatives for young people with SLCN and to ensure the service is 'communication friendly' and inclusive to facilitate increased engagement.

Question two, as detailed in 9.2, built on the findings from question one by exploring potential success factors of such a model. This is then followed up by an exploration of the contextual conditions and generative mechanisms leading to specific outcomes illustrated throughout the programme theories. This question aimed to understand the

generative mechanisms in relation to SLCN provision which promote engagement of young people in the context of increased staff knowledge about SLCN.

The CDYOS is an open system. Within this system there are a number of other systems operating with both internal and external influences. These influences create specific contexts which influence the behaviours of the people (actors) within the system, creating causal mechanisms with emergent properties and leading to specific outcomes. These actions produce feedback loops and it is through these loops that emergent behaviours are either endorsed or discarded. The programme theories developed through this research identify key contextual considerations. Within these contexts, emerging mechanisms are identified linked to SLCN related provision and specific outcomes which are produced as a result.

The programme theories developed through this research were presented as a neat list. However, in reality they are much messier and interconnected, as discussed in earlier chapters.

### ***Development of SLCN provision based on increased staff knowledge***

Question one identified four programme theories relating to the service conditions necessary for SLCN provision to be implemented, embedded and normalised. Question two has built on these programme theories through the exploration of six success factors contained within the model, and identified three additional supporting programme theories relating to staff awareness, appropriate referrals within the context of CDYOS and involvement of parents and carers and young people through awareness raising (see figure 19).

The following sections will explore the ‘how’ and ‘why’ SLCN related provision can impact on engagement with young people. This is through discussion of the programme theories in order to identify the core generative mechanisms affecting what successful YOS based SLCN provision looks like and how it impacts on engagement with young people.

*Figure 19: Overview of programme theories*

<b>PT 1: Making it real</b>		<b>PT 4: Co-design</b>	
Context	CDYOS	Context	Having strong direction and purpose in the design of the service delivery
Mechanism: Resource	Increased awareness raising about SLCN	Mechanism: Resource	Building on individual specialisms and knowledge
Mechanism: Reasoning	Understanding of what SLCN related provision should look like	Mechanism: Reasoning	Prompts a co-construction approach and collective view of need
Outcome	Embedded practice changes within the service	Outcome	More meaningful and relevant service delivery
<b>PT 2: Core values</b>		<b>PT 5: Staff awareness</b>	
Context	Complex criminal justice context	Context	Staff being more aware of SLCN
Mechanism: Resource	Ensure CDYOS is 'communication friendly' service	Mechanism: Resource	Deliver relevant support to young people
Mechanism: Reasoning	Young people engaging with the service are more likely to understand and comprehend what is going on	Mechanism: Reasoning	Staff have the knowledge to adapt their working practices
Outcome	Young people engage more effectively with the service	Outcome	Engagement with the service
<b>PT 3: In the mix</b>		<b>PT 6: Appropriate referrals</b>	
Context	Staff cohesion	Context	Staff being more aware of SLCN
Mechanism: Resource	Prompt learning together	Mechanism: Resource	Seconded SLT
Mechanism: Reasoning	Need to incorporate SLCN related provision within CDYOS	Mechanism: Reasoning	Staff have the knowledge of when to refer a young person for specialist support
Outcome	Development of a service which is more communication friendly	Outcome	Ensure appropriate referral takes place
		<b>PT 7: Involvement of parent/carers and young people</b>	
		Context	Successful involvement of young people, parents/carers with SLT
		Mechanism: Resource	Prompt behaviour change
		Mechanism: Reasoning	Increased awareness and understanding of SLCN
		Outcome	Increase successful engagement with the CDYOS

## Context

Within a complexity frame of reference, the CDYOS is viewed as a 'social system' with internal (i.e. staff, structures, cultural values) and external (i.e. political environment, national directive) influences. The programme theories identified a number of contextual considerations pertinent to the endorsement of providing SLCN related provision. The majority of these considerations relate to internal influences, for example staff cohesion, staff awareness, and having strong purpose in service delivery. This is not surprising as



although the prompt for inclusion of SLCN provision within the service came originally from a national government paper, it has been the local ownership and drive of the CDYOS to shape and include such provision within the service, which led to its success.

This notion of local drive has been central and was evidenced throughout the data collection in relation to both questions one and two. A strong desire from the majority of staff and connected stakeholders was evidenced in relation to a wanting to be involved in promoting a communication friendly service, with the needs of the young people engaging in the service firmly at its heart. Involvement here was primarily achieved by improving one's own awareness and understanding of SLCN related issues, and how these relate to the young people worked with. This was led by the CDYOS management, but there was significant buy-in and desire to learn and develop from all staff. This increase of knowledge facilitated, and brought about, changes in practices and behaviours within the service creating a shift in the contextual dynamic of the individual teams and overall service. Following increased awareness training staff were more easily able to identify and engage with young people with SLCN. This desire to be involved, to learn more about SLCN and thus improve and adapt practices shaped the local service delivery context of the CDYOS. Therefore, the majority of the programme theories relate to internal rather than external, contextual influences.

The one exception to this is programme theory two, whereby the complex nature of the criminal justice system is the focus of the contextual consideration. This was viewed to be an important construct as it has a role to play in shaping the wider macro and meso level systems, and thus has significant impact on the CDYOS. Within this programme theory the complexity of the wider systems making up the criminal justice system are acknowledged to stimulate a context which can be difficult, especially for young people, to navigate.

One contextual element which was reinforced, in particular to question two in relation to the breach rate and re-offending statistics, is that the CDYOS does not work in isolation. The CDYOS is part of a much bigger system and thus has a number of external contextual influences which shape service delivery mechanisms. Therefore,

relationships within the CDYOS will be affected by, and impacted upon, by contingent relationships, that either the young person or the CDYOS has with other organisations and/or services involved with the young person. The impact of these relationships has not been explored in detail as the research has focused on the CDYOS and the service structure it has in order to include SLCN related provision. However, it is important to consider that these relationships will shape the context of the CDYOS and therefore influence the mechanisms generated in relation to how they are received by staff.

As systems within the CDYOS are developed and refined in relation to the incorporation of SLCN related provision, they establish properties and powers on their own, they are not static, they adapt. This was observed throughout the research whereby the refinement of the service delivery as the research progressed resulted in emergent properties which transformed the understanding of context. New understanding of the impacts of SLCN on the young people and their engagement with the CDYOS evolved, prompted by the accumulation of new knowledge about SLCN by staff. This resulted in 'awareness of SLCN' in some form featuring in most of the programme theories, due to its significant influence on responses to mechanisms, as well as forming the basis for emerging mechanisms.

### ***Mechanisms***

The contexts within the CDYOS system as detailed above impact on how mechanisms relating to incorporation of SLCN related provision are both 'fired' and received. Mechanisms identified through the programme theories connected to the incorporation of SLCN related provision produce 'dynamic relationships' whereby feedback between the component parts is seen to generate non-linear behaviour (Williams, 2015).

Mechanisms identified have been categorised into 'resource' and 'reasoning'. Dalkin (2015) highlights how disaggregating the concept of a mechanism into its constituent parts helps to understand the difference between the resources offered by the intervention and the ways in which this changes the reasoning of people involved. This

approach has been adopted as it has allowed for the 'how' (resource) and 'why' (reasoning) of mechanisms to be explored with regards to their potential impacts. With this approach, in particular, the importance of raising awareness within stakeholders is acknowledged through explicitly stating the reason behind the incorporation of the mechanism (resource).

The programme theories identified, with the exception of programme theory four, mechanisms which relate to the awareness of SLCN at an individual level and/or the associated behavioural impacts of this increased awareness. Staff awareness, as explored within question one, was the core theme running through the data collection and is identified as a core generative mechanism. The resource provided by having an increased awareness of SLCN is evidenced to influence (reasoning) behavioural changes, and thus stimulate the outcomes observed. This focus on individual behaviour relates to the concept of agency, whereby the power of people as actors within the social world is acknowledged (Bryman, 2004). Staff knowledge is the core generative mechanism illustrated throughout the research to impact on and facilitate the incorporation of SLCN related provision within the YOS.

Programme theory four identifies the individual specialisms of staff within CDYOS as a mechanism from which to see change in relation to meaningful service delivery made.

The relationships between the mechanisms identified and the context and outcomes can be considered to be dynamic. That is, feedback loops alter and adapt the emergent properties exhibited by the CDYOS and the staff within it as a result of the dynamic relationship between structure and agent within the system. These influences were seen to create specific contexts, which in turn impact and influence the behaviours exhibited by actors (CDYOS staff) and thus create causal mechanisms within the emerging properties, leading to specific outcomes. For example, raising awareness of SLCN and how it impacts on engagement methods with young people within the CDYOS was observed through the staff questionnaires in question two, to prompt specific behavioural changes. These behavioural changes, through feedback loops, alter the context of the CDYOS. I.e with more staff changing their behaviour, these behaviours become

normalised within the service. These normalised behaviours then create new standards, which in turn, create new contextual conditions within the CDYOS.

### ***Outcome***

Non-linear systems, such as the CDYOS, interact to create behaviours which are more than the mere sum of their parts. Therefore, it is important to consider outcomes as a result of the mechanisms firing within the context described rather than being universal.

The outcomes of the programme theories produced through this research relate to the effective engagement of young people within the CDYOS. In order for young people to get the most out of their experience with the YOS their engagement needs to be more than simply 'passive involvement', instead engagement relates to young people being committed to the objectives of the initiatives and/or programmes they are part of (Mason & Prior, 2008). In addition, the formation of positive relationships between staff and young people, along with a motivation by the young person to want change, and awareness of the consequences of behaviour have been suggested to define engagement (YJB, 2010). It is of no surprise therefore that engagement was viewed to be the outcome of all the programme theories. In acknowledging and incorporating SLCN related provision within the YOS setting, various mechanisms are fired, with the overall aim of promoting engagement with young people in the service, so that everyone has an equitable, regardless of SLCN experienced, opportunity to access services.

## **13.5 Conclusion**

The core themes running through this research have been awareness and engagement. Awareness of SLCN has shaped the generative mechanisms observed through the research. This in turn has, through feedback loops, created adapted contextual environments within the CDYOS in response to increased awareness of both SLCN and its impact on young people and how they can engage with the service.

The complexity informed realist approach adopted within this research has provided a focus on contingency, on how particular configurations of context can trigger mechanisms and how these can shift in relation to emerging outcomes (Gerrits & Verweij, 2013). The context of the CDYOS is ever changing as a result of the emergent properties of the system. However, within particular contexts, specific mechanisms can expect to be triggered leading to particular outcomes.

The core generative mechanisms contributing to the successful incorporation of SLCN provision within the YOS relate to an increased awareness of SLCN issues. The increased awareness of SLCN has been evidenced to lead to an adaptation of behaviours and practices by staff which are thought to increase engagement with young people.

Overall, at an abstract level, it can be concluded that:

*If a YOS has staff which have an increased awareness of SLCN (context) this knowledge (mechanism; resource) will influence behaviours and practices (mechanism; reasoning) which will increase engagement with young people within the service (outcome).*

## Abbreviations

<b>CDYOS</b>	County Durham Youth Offending Service
<b>CMO</b>	Context Mechanism Outcome
<b>IPT</b>	Initial Programme Theory
<b>NPT</b>	Normalisation Process Theory
<b>NTHFT</b>	North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust
<b>PT</b>	Programme Theory
<b>RFPP</b>	Risk Factor Prevention Paradigm
<b>SLCN</b>	Speech Language and Communication Need
<b>SLT</b>	Speech and Language Therapist
<b>YOS</b>	Youth Offending Service <sup>10</sup>
<b>YOT</b>	Youth Offending Team
<b>YJB</b>	Youth Justice Board
<b>YJS</b>	Youth Justice System
<b>HDFT</b>	Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust
<b>TEWV</b>	Tees Esk and Wear Valleys Mental Health Trust

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<sup>10</sup> Note YOT and YOS are often used interchangeably, with the recognition that these services will be known by different names for different organisations. YOS has been used throughout this thesis as this is the term CDYOS use.

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## Appendix A: Stakeholder Information Sheet



Postgraduate Research study:

### **Exploring the Development and Impact of Speech and Language Services for Young Offenders**

#### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPANTS: MODEL DEVELOPMENT**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Joining the study is entirely up to you, before you decide I would like you to understand why the research is being undertaken and what it would involve for you. Someone will go through this information sheet with you, to help you decide whether or not you would like to take part and answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to talk to others about the study if you wish.

The first part of this Participant Information Sheet tells you the purpose of the study and what will happen to you if you take part. Followed by more detailed information about the conduct of the study. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Sam Redgate (PhD Student leading this research) at [samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk)

#### **Purpose of the study**

Research is being undertaken with the County Durham Youth Offending Service (YOS) to identify/develop, implement and evaluate an evidenced based service model which can positively impact upon young people with identified speech, language and communication difficulties who offend.

You are being invited to be part of the above research study. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and contact me if anything is unclear, or if you would like more information.

#### **Why have I been chosen?**

You are being invited to take part in this research as an identified key stakeholder in connection to the County Durham YOS



### **What will participation involve?**

You are being invited to participate in a semi-structured interview which will take approximately 30-40 minutes. The interview will be carried out at a location convenient to you.

It is intended that the interview is an opportunity for you to express your views on how speech, language and communication is incorporated within the YOS and how it impacts on both the young people involved and external services.

The interview will be tape recorded, and later transcribed into text form. Recordings of interviews will be deleted upon transcription. You would be very welcome to a copy of the final report. Information from our discussion will not be shared with anyone else. However, I am bound under ethical obligations to share any information with the County Durham Youth Offending Service, if I feel it is in your best interests to protect your welfare or the welfare of others.

As part of the presentation of results, your own words may be used in text form. This will be anonymised, so that you cannot be identified from what you said.

Please note that:

- You can decide to stop the interview at any point
- You need not answer questions that you do not wish to
- Your name will be removed from the information and anonymised. It should not be possible to identify anyone from my reports on this study.
- All data will be stored securely on Northumbria university or Durham County Council computer servers and will be deleted following completion of this study

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw during the interview or at any time prior to September 2017 without giving a reason. If you withdraw from the study all data will be withdrawn and destroyed.

If you have any questions about the research please email me at [samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk)

Alternatively you can contact my Principle Supervisor, Wendy Dyer, Senior Lecturer at Northumbria University to discuss this research or raise any issues/complaints at [wendy.dyer@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:wendy.dyer@northumbria.ac.uk)

If you would like to discuss and confirm the links with this research and the County Durham Youth Offending Service, please contact Gill Eshelby on 03000 260000.

Appendix B: Stakeholder Consent Form



Postgraduate Research study:  
**Exploring the Development and Impact of Speech and Language Services  
for Young Offenders**

**STAKEHOLDER CONSENT: PHASE 1 MODEL DEVELOPMENT**

	Yes	No
I confirm that I have read the information sheet reference ST02 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to be interviewed for the above study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name: .....

Position: .....

Signed: .....

Date: .....



## **Your Voice Matters... An Invitation to be part of research**

### **Exploring the Development and Impact of Speech and Language Services for Young Offenders**

#### **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET: MODEL DEVELOPMENT**

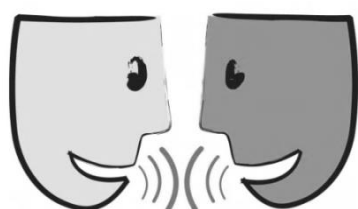
My name is Sam Redgate. I am doing a PhD at Northumbria University. I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Joining the study is entirely up to you, before you decide I would like you to understand why the research is being undertaken and what it would involve for you. Someone will go through this information sheet with you, to help you decide whether or not you would like to take part and answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to talk to others about the study if you want to.

The first part of this Participant Information Sheet tells you the reason for doing this study and what will happen to you if you take part. More detailed information about the study is then provided. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at [samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk)

#### **Reason for the research**

A PhD means I am learning about something through doing research. I do lots of reading, writing and talking with young people and adults for my PhD.

My research looks at what help County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) young people get for:



- Understanding
- Talking
- Getting on with people

### **Why does it matter what help young people get?**

Sometimes people find understanding what people say difficult. They get confused. They may get frustrated and make mistakes. It's hard to learn from mistakes when you don't understand easily.

Sometimes people find talking about their thoughts and feelings difficult. They get cross or sad when they can't say what they want. They don't enjoy doing some activities.

My research work will give the Youth Offending Service ideas about:

- what young people need and want
- what helps young people
- what does not help young people

### **Why have I been chosen?**

You have been chosen as you are involved with the County Durham Youth Offending Service.

### **What will I do as part of the research?**

I would like to talk to you about your involvement with the Youth Offending Service, and other people you have met and worked with through the Youth Offending Service.

I would like to understand if you feel you have had any difficulties understanding and/or talking with people from the Youth Offending Service, and what you think could make it better.



And finally I would like to know what you think the good and bad bits about talking and working with the Youth Offending Service are?

Our talk will be recorded on audio tape. This will help me remember what is said. I will use your words in my research but not your name. No one will know who you are! All tape recordings will be deleted after I have written them up.

Our discussion will not be shared with anyone else. However, I am bound under ethical obligations to share any information with the County Durham Youth Offending Service, if I feel it is in your best interests to protect your welfare or the welfare of others.

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw during the interview or at any time prior to September 2017 without giving a reason. If you withdraw from the study all data will be withdrawn and destroyed.

If you have any questions about the research please email me at [Samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk)

### **What happens when I don't want to carry on helping with the research work?**

You can stop the talk with me at any time you want.

You don't need to answer any questions you don't want to.

It is okay to change your thoughts about helping me.

You must tell me when you don't want to help me. This is okay. When you say you don't want to be part of my research work, you will not be part of the research work.

All information from the research will be stored securely on Northumbria University or Durham County Council computer servers and will be deleted following completion of this study

Email me or my Supervisor (Wendy Dyer, Senior Lecturer at Northumbria University) if you have any questions about my research or would like to make any complaints on:

[Samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk)

[Wendy.dyer@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Wendy.dyer@northumbria.ac.uk)

If you would like to talk about and confirm the links with this research and the County Durham Youth Offending Service, please contact Gill Eshelby on 03000 260000.

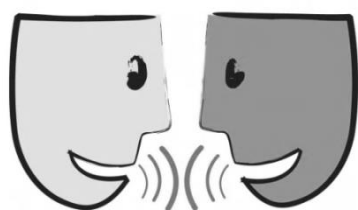


## **Your Voice Matters... An Invitation to be part of research**

My name is Sam Redgate. I am doing a PhD at Northumbria University.

A PhD means I am learning about something through doing research. I do lots of reading, writing and talking with young people for my PhD.

My research looks at what help County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) young people get for:



- Understanding
- Talking
- Getting on with people

### **Why does it matter what help young people get?**

Sometimes people find understanding what people say difficult. They get confused. They may get frustrated and make mistakes. It's hard to learn from mistakes when you don't understand easily.

Sometimes people find talking about their thoughts and feelings difficult. They get cross or sad when they can't say what they want. They don't enjoy doing some activities.

My research work will give the Youth Offending Service ideas about:

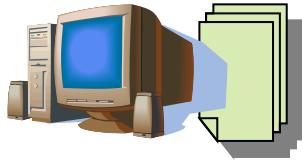
- what young people need and want
- what helps young people
- what does not help young people

### **What will I do?**

I need to get information about County Durham Youth Offending Service young people. This information may come from:

- A) County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) computers and files.
- B) Talking with some County Durham Youth Offending service young people

#### **A) CDYOS Computer Information and files**



- When the young person agrees, I will use the information given to County Durham Youth Offending Service in my research work. This will show generally:
  - Who uses the service
  - What these young people need

All names will be taken off the information I use. I won't know who the information is from. When I write about my findings young people's names will **not** be used.

#### **B) Talking with some CDYOS young people**



Some young people may be asked to meet with me. When they are happy to meet with me, they will be asked about:

- What they think about their talking, listening and people skills
- The good and bad bits about talking and working with the Youth Offending Service
- What work they did with the Youth Offending Service; if you think these have helped any problems you have with talking, listening or expressing yourself
- Ideas for getting any help needed

Our talk will be recorded on audio tape. This will help me remember what is said. I will use your words in my research but not your name. No one will know who you are! All tape recordings will be deleted after I have written them up.

#### **What happens when I don't want to carry on helping with the research work?**

You can stop the talk with me at any time you want.

You don't need to answer any questions you don't want to.

It is okay to change your thoughts about helping me.



You must tell me when you don't want to help me. This is okay. When you say you don't want to be part of my research work, you will not be part of the research work.

Email me or my Supervisor (Wendy Dyer, Senior Lecturer at Northumbria University) if you have any questions about my research or would like to make any complaints on:

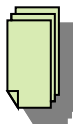
[Samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk)

[Wendy.dyer@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Wendy.dyer@northumbria.ac.uk)

If you would like to talk about and confirm the links with this research and the County Durham Youth Offending Service, please contact Gill Eshelby on 03000 260000.

**Consent**

**Yes    No**



I am happy for Sam Redgate to look at County Durham Youth Offending Service's and the Speech and Language Therapist's information about me.  
I understand Sam Redgate will use this information about me in her research work.  
I know my name will not be used in any of Sam Redgate's written work.

☐

☐



I am happy to meet with Sam Redgate.  
(Only a small number of people will be picked to be interviewed. I will not be able to interview everyone who wants to be interviewed.)

☐

☐

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are under 16 we also need your parents/guardians consent to participate in this research

Parent/Guardian name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

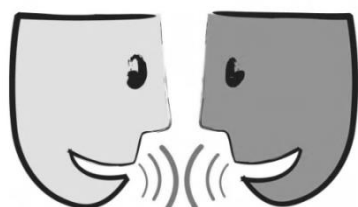


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Sometimes people find talking about their thoughts and feelings difficult. They get cross or sad when they can't say what they want. They don't enjoy doing some activities.

My research work will give the Youth Offending Service ideas about:

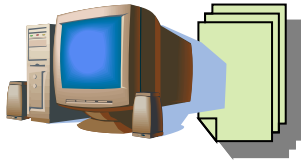
- what young people need and want
- what helps young people
- what does not help young people

### **What will I do?**

I need to get information about County Durham Youth Offending Service young people. This information may come from:

- A) County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) computers and files.
- B) Talking with some County Durham Youth Offending service young people

## A) CDYOS Computer Information and files



- When the young person agrees, I will use the information given to County Durham Youth Offending Service in my research work. This will show generally:
  - Who uses the service
  - What these young people need

All names will be taken off the information I use. I won't know who the information is from. When I write about my findings young people's names will **not** be used.

## B) Talking with some CDYOS young people



Some young people may be asked to meet with me. When they are happy to meet with me, they will be asked about:

- What they think about their talking, listening and people skills
- The good and bad bits about talking and working with the Youth Offending Service
- What work they did with the Youth Offending Service; if you think these have helped any problems you have with talking, listening or expressing yourself
- Ideas for getting any help needed

Our talk will be recorded on audio tape. This will help me remember what is said. I will use your words in my research but not your name. No one will know who you are! All tape recordings will be deleted after I have written them up.

## What happens when I don't want to carry on helping with the research work?

You can stop the talk with me at any time you want.

You don't need to answer any questions you don't want to.

It is okay to change your thoughts about helping me.

You must tell me when you don't want to help me. This is okay. When you say you don't want to be part of my research work, you will not be part of the research work.

Email me or my Supervisor (Wendy Dyer, Senior Lecturer at Northumbria University) if you have any questions about my research or would like to make any complaints on:

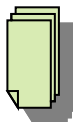
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[Wendy.dryer@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Wendy.dryer@northumbria.ac.uk)

If you would like to talk about and confirm the links with this research and the County Durham Youth Offending Service, please contact Gill Eshelby on 03000 260000.

**Consent**

**Yes    No**



I am happy for Sam Redgate to look at County Durham Youth Offending Service's and the Speech and Language Therapist's information about me.

☐ ☐

I understand Sam Redgate will use this information about me in her research work.

I know my name will not be used in any of Sam Redgate's written work.



I am happy to meet with Sam Redgate.

(Only a small number of people will be picked to be interviewed. I will not be able to interview everyone who wants to be interviewed.)

☐ ☐

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Research with the County Durham Youth Offending Team**

### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS**

#### **Background**

Sometimes people find understanding what people say difficult. They get confused. They may get frustrated and make mistakes. It's hard to learn from mistakes when you don't understand easily.

Sometimes people find talking about their thoughts and feelings difficult. They get cross or sad when they can't say what they want. They don't enjoy doing some activities.

My name is Sam Redgate and I am doing a PhD at Northumbria University. My research will look at what help young people involved with County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) get for:

- Understanding
- Talking
- Getting on with people

#### **Why does it matter what help young people get?**

My research work will give the Youth Offending Service ideas about:

- what young people need and want
- what helps young people
- what does not help young people

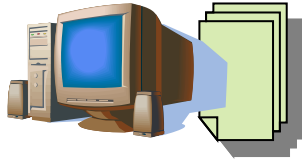
#### **What will I do?**

I need to get information about County Durham Youth Offending Service young people. This information may come from:

- A) County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) computers and files.

- B) Talking with some County Durham Youth Offending service young people

#### A) CDYOS Computer Information and files



- When the young person agrees, I will use the information given to County Durham Youth Offending Service in my research work. This will show generally:
  - Who uses the service
  - What these young people need

All names will be taken off the information I use. I won't know who the information is from. When I write about my findings young people's names will **not** be used.

#### B) Talking with some CDYOS young people



Some young people may be asked to meet with me. When they are happy to meet with me, they will be asked about:

- What they think about their talking, listening and people skills
- The good and bad bits about talking and working with the Youth Offending Service
- What work they did with the Youth Offending Service; if they think these have helped any problems they have with talking, listening or expressing themselves
- Ideas for getting any help needed

Our talk will be recorded on audio tape. This will help me remember what is said. I may use words from the meeting in my research but names will **not** be used. No one will know who I have spoken to. All tape recordings will be deleted after I have written them up.

#### What happens if I don't want my child to be part of the research work?

I will only access information from computer files and talk to people if I have consent to do so. If you are happy for your child to be included in this research please complete the consent form.



Please email me or my Supervisor (Wendy Dyer, Senior Lecturer at Northumbria University) if you have any questions about my research or would like to make any complaints on:

[Samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk)

[Wendy.dryer@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Wendy.dryer@northumbria.ac.uk)

If you would like to talk about and confirm the links with this research and the County Durham Youth Offending Service, please contact Gill Eshelby on 03000 260000.

If you decide part way through the research that you no longer want your child to take part that is okay, you just need to let me know.



## Exploring the Development and Impact of Speech and Language Services for Young Offenders: Model Development

### PARENT CONSENT FORM: MODEL DEVELOPMENT

	Yes	No
I confirm that I have read the information sheet reference PA02 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without their social care or legal rights being affected.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that relevant sections of my child's notes and data collected by County Durham Youth Offending Service and the Speech and Language Therapist working into County Durham Youth Offending Service, will be looked at by the researcher (Sam Redgate). I give permission for these individuals to have access to my child's records.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that the information collected about my child may be used to support other research in the future, and may be shared anonymously with other researchers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree for information held about my child to be used in the above study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree for my child to be interviewed for the above study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Childs name:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Child's date of birth:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date:  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix H: Young Person Interview Schedule

### **Model Outcome Development, Young People Interviews: January – March 2016**

#### **Interview Schedule**

#### Introduction

Hello, my name is Sam Redgate. I am doing a PhD at Northumbria University, which means I am learning about something through doing research. I am going to have a talk to you about what you think young people need and want in the Youth Offending Service, what you think helps young people and what you think does not help young people

#### **SECTION 1**

##### **1: What do you think the word communication means?**

P: What else is involved?

*Communication is about how people speak; being able to say what you want to clearly so others understand; and listen to what other people have to say. Communication can also be about your actions when you are not talking, for example your body language, how you sit/stand*

##### **2: How important do you think it is to have good communication? (scale 0 – 5)**

P: What about for e.g. school, friends, relationships?

P: What makes you say that?

#### **SECTION 2**

*I would now like you to think about your communication with the Youth Offending Service*

##### **3: How much do you understand what the workers in the Youth Offending Service tell you? (scale 0 -5)**

P: What do they do that makes you give them this score?

P: What could be done to make the communication better?

##### **4: How satisfied are you with how your workers in the Youth Offending Service communicate with you? (scale 0 – 5)**

P: What would you change and why?

**5: What could be done to make the way the Youth Offending Service communicates with you better?**

P: What has made you say that? What difference will it make?

## Appendix I: SLT Call For Evidence

Area	Contract			Service users		Assessments		Interventions delivered				Links with community	Awareness training			Other
	SALT employed/seconded	SALT - no. of days a week working within YOS	Funding source (i.e. Local Authority/NHS)	Population covered - community	Population covered - secure	Provide assessments for SLCN on entry?	Provide report following assessment	Provide direct interventions (if required)?	Direct interventions provided	Provide indirect interventions (if required)?	Indirect interventions provided	Refer to community SALT (if required)?	Provide awareness training for staff/stakeholders on SLCN	Areas covered by awareness training	Awareness training audience	Any other comments
Sussex	2 positions: 1 = secondment & 1 = Bank shifts	Work within Police and Court Liaison and Diversion Service but do a lot of work with YOS across West Sussex, Brighton and Hove and East Sussex. Total PCLDS days per week = 6	NHS England	Yes	Not often, but has been known in our service	Yes, when referral for direct specialist assessment received and triaged	Yes	Yes, this has recently been started	Currently carrying out a short intervention block on recognising and regulating emotions. Looking to potentially carry out short blocks of intervention (such as vocabulary or narrative intervention) for 4-6 sessions but this has not as yet been done	Yes	Targeted work involves consultation with those working with the young person and providing advice to the team around the child.	Yes	Yes	Prevalence of SLCN in young offender population, impact of communication difficulties, recognising communication difficulties, strategies to enhance communication, using the AssetPlus SLCN screening tool, how to make referral	Police, magistrates, staff in Youth Offending Services across Sussex, and other staff working with young people involved in the Youth Justice System	
Leeds	Traded (YOS buys in SALT from NHS)	2 (additional days in YOI & secure)	YOS	Yes	Yes (but not in YOS time)	Yes	Yes. Provide report detailing the areas of strength and difficulties and strategies that can be used to help the young person's communication.	Yes	Direct therapy	Yes	programmes and recommendations	yes	Yes	Communication - to enable them [YOS staff] to carry out recommendations in my reports	YOS staff	
Durham	Yes - seconded	5	Local Authority and NHS Trust	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	YES, vocab, understanding com needs,	Yes	Development of flash cards Support Case Manager understand impact of com diff's for Pre Sentence Report needed for court Supporting Team around the Family prof's understand young person's com needs Reports for solicitors to support intermediary provision for court Training school staff Signposting Referral and involvement in Autistic Spectrum Disorder diagnostic team process strategy demo for school staff Resources for YOS staff Contributing to Education Health Care Plan and education placement process	Yes	Yes	SLCN Overview AssetPlus SLC and N screen Understanding language Social Communication Diff's Strategies Behaviour Why vocab is a nightmare Why questions are a nightmare Plus accredited Eiklan course Vulnerable Young People Plan to offer SLT Dept training in Youth Justice and working with young people	YOS Workers, volunteers, school staff, magistrates, All Party Parliamentary Group, SLT's NYAS Established regional peer support group	ClearCut Communication resource creation and publication
Durham, Darlington and Middlesbrough (Tees)	Yes employed	0 - 1 work in the Liaison and Diversion Team which works will all ages from 10 years up ( 5 days a week)	NHS	Yes	No	Not at present but plan to implement screening	Yes, once set up.	Not decided yet, however am planning for scope of 4 sessions after assessment. This however may change.	potentially	Yes, potentially	Yes, potentially. Plans to make user friendly resources for LND Team and custody staff to use.	Yes	Yes. Main area of need/role at present. Planning to role out training to LND team, custody staff, court staff.	LND team, custody staff, court staff.	LND team, custody staff, court staff.	It's very new role in a very new team!

Luton	SALT employed and seconded to Local Authority	5	Money out of YOS budget	Yes	No	Yes	yes	Yes	complete the CHAT, look at their auditory memory, do the time screening assessment, informally look at the TALC and then complete the CELF-3 if appropriate. I then liaise with education settings and write a report with recommendations. If therapy is indicated I will provide sessions for as long as needed (dysfluency, telling the time, concepts, pragmatics etc).	Yes	Support case workers, assist with making resources communication friendly	Yes	Yes	what is SLCN, SLCN in YJS, identification of SLCN, AssetPlus screening tool, how to refer, how I assess, therapy and ideas to move forward (making communication friendly resources)	YOS staff, referral order panel volunteers	
Bexley	-	1		Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	n/a	-	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	
Nottingham	n/a not directly employed by YOTs	0	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Not directly employed to work in YOTs. However, undertaking scoping exercises that have links with YOTs, 1 working in a secure childrens home and one incorporating two liaison and diversion teams (links with the YOTs through custody and court process)
Bath and North East Somerset	Seconded from Sirona, social enterprise	1	NHS services Clinical Commissioning Group	Yes	No	Screening for SLCN on entry that can lead to assessment	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	Consultation and advice to caseworkers at YOS & Compass (preventative team); communication profiles of YP provided for court/panel appearances to inform magistrates/ panel members; joint planning and adaptation of YOS intervention programmes	Yes	Yes	SLCN overview (relevance of SLCN in YJS; identification of SLCN using screening tool; highlighting the subtlety and masking in older children; strategies and adaptations)	YOS staff; Project 28 (drugs and alcohol support agency); panel members	1 day pw feels very stretched. Most of role focussed around identification of SLCN with little scope to provide anything further if YP not in school/cannot access SALT community/education services

Appendix J: Stakeholder Interview Schedule

**Model Outcome Development Stakeholder Interviews: January – March 2016**

**Interview Schedule**

Questions

- 1) **What is your current involvement with the County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS)/what links does your organisation have with the CDYOS?**

P: Clarify if the stakeholder is engaged with Young People or if (s)he works in a more service development/policy position

- 2) My research is specifically connected to the issues faced by young people with 'speech, language and communication need' (SLCN). This is a generic term which encompasses the entire spectrum of needs a person may experience in relation to one or more of the following: speech; language; and communication. Young people may present with difficulties in any or all of these areas (speech, language and communication). In simple terms 'understanding others and making themselves understood' (Dept. Education, 2011).

**Thinking about the journey young people face when entering the Youth Offending Service what support and resources do you feel are required for young people with speech, language and communication needs?**

*Use flipchart sheet with timeline for young person's engagement with CDYOS drawn on ranging from Pre-engagement, initial engagement, continued engagement to disengagement and ask interviewee to discuss and help populate what (1) support, and (2) resources are required throughout the journey.*

P: Why do you say that?

What effect will that support/resource provide?

Who is best placed to deliver that support/resource?

- 3) **If all of the support and resources we have discussed were incorporated into CDYOS as a new 'service model' what would you say should be the overarching aim of such a model?**

P: Why do you say that?

P: What do you think the objectives of such a model should be?

P: How would you determine if the model had been successful?

P: What outcome measures should be included?





## **Exploring the Development and Impact of Speech and Language Services for Young People who Offend**

### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPANTS**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Joining the study is entirely up to you, before you decide I would like you to understand why the research is being undertaken and what it would involve for you.

The first part of this Participant Information Sheet tells you the purpose of the study and what will happen if you take part. Followed by more detailed information about the conduct of the study. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Sam Redgate (PhD Student leading this research) at [samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk)

#### **Purpose of the study**

Research is being undertaken with the County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS) to identify/develop, implement and evaluate an evidenced based service model which can positively impact upon young people with identified speech, language and communication difficulties who offend.

You are being invited to be part of the above research study. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and contact me if anything is unclear, or if you would like more information.

#### **Why have I been chosen?**

You are being invited to take part in this research as an identified key stakeholder in connection to the CDYOS

#### **What will participation involve?**

You are being invited to participate in the research via a self-completion questionnaire.

This questionnaire is an opportunity for you to express your views on how speech, language and communication is incorporated within the CDYOS and how it impacts on both the young people involved and external services.

All questionnaires will be input and anonymised for analysis by the Researcher.

As part of the presentation of results, comments made within the questionnaire may be used in text form. This will be anonymised, so that you cannot be identified from what you said.

Please note that:

- You can decide to stop completion of the questionnaire at any point
- You need not answer questions that you do not wish to
- All Questionnaires are anonymous.
- All data will be stored securely on Northumbria University computer servers and will be deleted following completion of this study

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time prior to September 2017 without giving a reason. If you withdraw from the study all data will be withdrawn and destroyed.

If you have any questions about the research please email me at [samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:samantha.redgate@northumbria.ac.uk)

Alternatively you can contact my Principle Supervisor, Wendy Dyer, Senior Lecturer at Northumbria University to discuss this research or raise any issues/complaints at [wendy.dyer@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:wendy.dyer@northumbria.ac.uk)

If you would like to discuss and confirm the links with this research and the County Durham Youth Offending Service, please contact Sarah Caden on 03000 260000.

**About you**

Q1. How long have you worked for CDYOS? ..... years ..... months

Q2. What is your job title .....

**Understanding of speech, language and communication**

Q3. Have you undertaken any speech, language and communication training?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (*please go to Q8*)

Q4. If yes, what did this training include? (*please tick all that apply*)

- ☐ Informal discussions/training with colleagues
- ☐ Informal discussions/training with Speech and Language Therapist (Susan)
- ☐ Formal training with Speech and Language Therapist (Susan) as part of my induction
- ☐ Formal training with Speech and Language Therapist (Susan) half day/full day
- ☐ Formal training with Speech and Language Therapist (Susan) as a refresher
- ☐ Other, please specify .....

Q5. What was the main thing you took from this training?

.....  
.....

Q6. Has the training, or do you feel it will, affect your working practices within CDYOS?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (*please go to Q8*)

Q7. If yes, in what ways?

.....

.....

Q8. How would you rate your current level of knowledge about speech, language and communications needs of young people who offend?

I know nothing about speech. language and communication needs and how they can affect young people who offend <input type="checkbox"/>	I know a little about speech. language and communication needs and how they can affect young people who offend <input type="checkbox"/>	I know a fair amount about speech. language and communication needs and how they can affect young people who d <input type="checkbox"/> nd	I know a lot about speech. language and communication needs and how they can affect young people who offend <input type="checkbox"/>
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Q9. Has the knowledge you have gained about speech, language and communication needs and how it can affect young people that offend, influenced your working practices?

Yes ☐      No ☐      I believe it will, but only just completed training ☐

Q10. Please can you give an example of how you have/or intend to use knowledge of speech, language and communication needs to assist you with your day to day work at CDYOS?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Q11. Please can you provide details of any areas you would like to learn more about?

.....

.....

**Thank you for your time**